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AUGUST 2015

COUNTRY STYLE

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EVERYDAY

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WINNING
SHORT STORY

STEP INSIDE

A passion for
design transforms
a historic cottage

FROM THE BUSH
TO COMMONWEALTH
GAMES GOLD
NETBALLER
LAURA GEITZ

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EVERY YEAR WE ARE OVERWHELMED BY THE ENTRIES TO OUR SHORT STORY COMPETITION.

And it's not just the numbers. It's the lovely notes many of you include, thanking us for having a competition and telling us how it has inspired you to write. That's exactly why

we have it in the first place, so I feel very happy that we have encouraged so many of you to dabble in the world of words.

"I have worked on this piece, my first ever, for a couple of months now, so I am excited to be entering. Thanks for making opportunities like this available, as I would not have written at all had you not had this contest," wrote Joanne Hagan of Romsey in Victoria. And she wasn't the only one. When I spoke to our winner, Donna Coutts, she told me that this was the first short story she had ever written as an adult — turn to page 62 for her piece, *Flood*. Thank you to author Cate Kennedy, who loved the "dead-on accuracy of how life in a country town works" of Donna's story, for her expert eye during the judging process — and to the rest of our dedicated team who read the stories.

Also in this issue, the story of artist Lucy Vader — see page 18 — really captured my imagination. I love her work but when I heard that she also has three places in the country to which she can escape and paint, I definitely had that 'I want her life' moment. We visited her at Millers Creek Station, a 4850-hectare property between Willow Tree and Merriwa in northern NSW, where she was offered a cottage and a shed in which to paint by owner Jossie Walton. Lucy likes to spend time with the shearers at work and says she is "looking forward to painting a shearing series with a nod to Tom Roberts". Lucy, if you're reading this now, turn to page 98 where you'll see some very inspiring images by Mark Roper, who photographed wool classers Tracy Halpin and Emma Morvell.

You'll find more inspiring women, including designer Jenny Kee, at the Women of Wool lunch on Friday, July 17 in Bendigo, Victoria. I'm sure the conversation around the tables will give a wonderful insight into this dynamic industry.

Enjoy the issue,

Victoria

Victoria Carey



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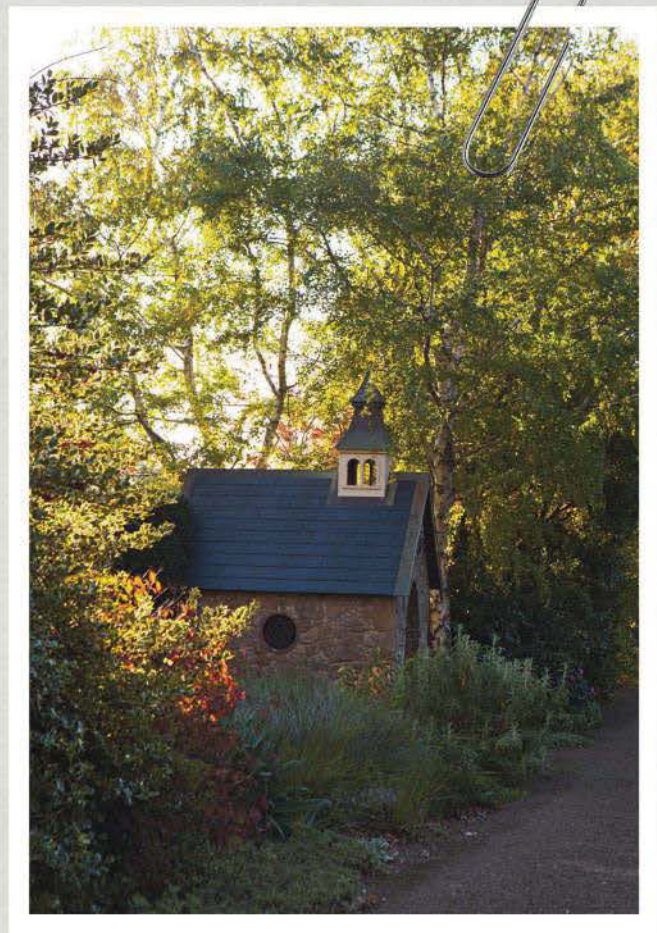
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next month...

Our annual Garden Issue is in full bloom, with visits to beautiful gardens, ideas for using arches and arbours in your plot, seasonal recipes and more.



COUNTRYSTYLE
SEPTEMBER ISSUE
ON SALE
AUGUST 13

SEE OUR GREAT SUBSCRIPTION
OFFER IN THIS ISSUE ON PAGE 132.

CONTRIBUTORS

in this issue...



CERI DAVID

Inspired by her visit to our cover house (see page 32), writer Ceri is looking at giving the garden at her holiday home a jump-start by planting mature trees.

Did you have a country childhood? I was born and raised in Wales, in the middle of nowhere. Hedgehogs snuffled through the garden at night and we'd watch salmon leaping up the waterfall in the autumn. Still, my teenage years were one long sulk at how stranded I felt. Now when I go back to visit, I see how beautiful it is.

What's your favourite country escape? We have a weekender at NSW's Jervis Bay, which is where I can forget about shoes, make-up and work.

Describe the Australian countryside? It's a country of contradictions. Lush and then dusty. Harsh but fruitful. Wild and tamed. The only constant is the endless sky.



BEC WHISH

Pictured here with son Mark, Bec looks after *Country Style's* online base at homelife.com.au

Did you have a country childhood? I grew up in the New England area of NSW. There was endless tree climbing, tadpole catching and food planting (my brother won Best Rockmelon at the Inverell Show when he was six — so proud!). We also had the odd poddy lamb running around the house wearing a nappy: Mum would cut holes for their tails.

What's your favourite country escape? I love the NSW town of Mullumbimby, near Byron Bay. Dear friends of mine live there in a beautiful bohemian house; a creek threads through their rainforest garden.

Where would you like to go next? I have been planning a swim with the whale sharks at Ningaloo Reef in WA for a few years now.

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OUR COVER
A SUNNY YELLOW DOOR
AND A FRIENDLY WELCOMING
COMMITTEE ARE WAITING IN
NSW'S BOWRAL. SEE PAGE 32.

PHOTOGRAPHY BRIGID ARNOTT
STYLING LISA HILTON



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AND SAVE UP TO 28%. SEE PAGE 132.**



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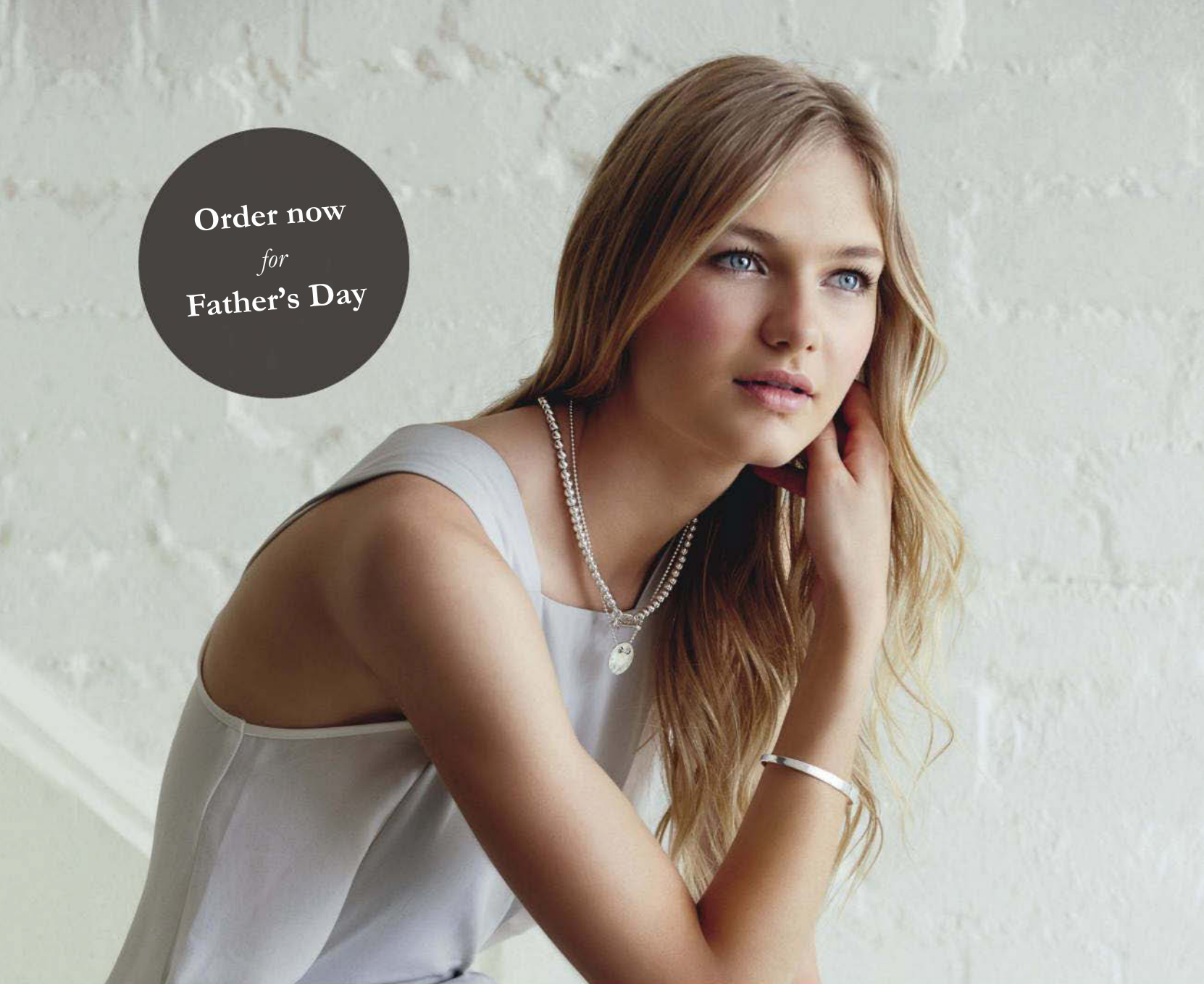
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MUCH TO ENJOY

Readers praised our Food and Wine issue. Stunning cover. *mintandfizz* on Instagram. Enjoyed the feature on Gippsland, especially Warragul highlights! *jommck* on Instagram. Must get this for the cake recipe. *Marie Blake*



A DAY OUT

On Instagram, our fashion story inspired some picnic plans. Photograph *Prue Ruscoe*, styling *Lara Hutton*

The world needs more picnics. *loujaegerart*

A must — especially in the country in winter. *siobhanrogers_beaspoke*



BAKERS' DELIGHT

Readers liked our story on Michelle Crawford's home in Tasmania and her recipe for walnut and quince cake, from her book *A Table in the Orchard*. Photograph *Sharyn Cairns*, styling *Beck Simon*

Going to try this one with the quinces from our trees. *Derice McDonald*
Lucky enough to get the last copy from *The Black Hen* at *Deloraine* and met *Michelle* who wrote a lovely message. *Trudy Beswick*

stress and darkness, he was right. I have been able to read *Country Style* and also think of him. (After 11 operations, chemotherapy and radiation, he is stable.)

Fay-Louise Pollock, Upper Beaconsfield, Victoria

AUSTRALIAN STORY

There's nothing like Australia's *Country Style*. I love English and American decoration, but Australian decorating is something else. It's simple yet stylish, uncluttered but still manages to show off a collection, an interest, a lifestyle. Not sophisticated or contrived and has a homely feel. It shows a way of life that is today and yesterday, warm and inviting. It's something that as Australians we should be proud of. That's why when I pick up my *Country Style* each month — I can't wait, first to feast my eyes on the images, then later to savour every word.

Ann Duncan, Mount Martha, Victoria

your page

Our pages strengthen ties with a loved one and inspire decorating success.

PRIDE OF PLACE

I have moved often and like a lot of people renting on a budget I have to make do, but every time I move I get comments about how great my place looks. Each one is different as I only ever move with a suitcase of necessities. My secret weapon — *Country Style*, my go-to for decorating ideas. There is always so much useful and interesting content. Thank you for keeping me full of enthusiasm.

Barbara Bryant-Rycroft, Stockton, NSW

LIGHT IN THE DARK

For many years my eldest son has given me a subscription to *Country Style* for my birthday. However, when he was unexpectedly struck down with bowel and bladder cancer, I said, "Please don't think about anything like subscriptions: just concentrate on yourself." But he replied, "Don't worry, Mum, I've organised it already — it will give you one good thing to look forward to at this time!" And in this time of



Congratulations to Barbara, Fay-Louise and Ann, who all win a copy of our *Country Style Homes* book (RRP \$39.99). Available at bookstores or online at shop.abc.net.au

Share your thoughts and experiences with us by writing to *Country Style*, Locked Bag 5030, Alexandria, NSW 2015, or by emailing austcountrystyle@news.com.au. Please include your address and daytime telephone number. Letters may be edited for reasons of space and clarity.

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Paint is applied thickly, layer by layer. FACING PAGE With dachshund Miffy, Lucy Vader at work on a diptych titled *Three Sheep*, beside *Thunder And Energy*, a painting of polo ponies for a US client. Red-primed canvases are the first stage of many works.

A photograph of a woman with blonde hair, wearing a black t-shirt, blue jeans, and a dark apron, kneeling on a concrete floor in an art studio. She is painting a large canvas on an easel with a brush. The studio is filled with various artworks: a large abstract painting with red, yellow, and blue strokes is on the left; a large red abstract painting is in the background; and another large abstract painting with green, yellow, and blue strokes is on the right. A small table with paint tubes and brushes is in front of her. A brown dog is lying on the floor in the foreground. The text 'drawn to the hills' is written in a white, cursive font in the upper right corner. Below it, the text 'HOW A GENEROUS OFFER OF A STUDIO ON A NSW PROPERTY INFLUENCED LUCY VADER'S WORK.' is written in a white, sans-serif font. Below that, the text 'WORDS MEGAN TROUSDALE' and 'PHOTOGRAPHY MICHAEL WEE' is written in a white, sans-serif font.

drawn to the hills

HOW A GENEROUS OFFER
OF A STUDIO ON A NSW
PROPERTY INFLUENCED
LUCY VADER'S WORK.

WORDS MEGAN TROUSDALE
PHOTOGRAPHY MICHAEL WEE

Lucy Vader stands waving in the doorway, framed by the whitewashed weatherboard walls of the hut she uses as a studio. All around are sheep-dotted paddocks stretching to the dramatic Liverpool Range, which seems appropriate as sheep have featured in quite a few of Lucy's works, including the striking *Crossing The Dawson, 1864* which was a finalist in the 2011 Sulman Prize.

"The merinos here are frustratingly scared of people and run away when I approach, which is no good for drawing them," Lucy says. "So I settle in, and wait as the sheep slowly return and I can observe them more closely."

The forms may be familiar but it's a different landscape from where she grew up, on the other side of the Great Dividing Range in the Mullumbimby hinterland. Millers Creek Station is a 4850-hectare sheep and cattle property between Willow Tree and Merriwa in northern NSW. Its owner, Jossie Walton, attended Lucy's first exhibition at Michael Reid Art Gallery at Murrurundi in the nearby Upper Hunter Valley in 2011. Impressed with what she saw, Jossie offered Lucy the use of an empty cottage and hut — and in 2014, Lucy took up the generous invitation.

Having graduated from Sydney's National Art School in 2011, she decided to return to the country, and now finds herself blessed with three rural NSW studios — at Millers Creek, the family home at Wilsons Creek, and a new space at The Channon, a village near Lismore.

Last year was also a big year for exhibitions, as Lucy presented works at Michael Reid's Murrurundi and Berlin galleries, the Moree Regional Gallery, the Blackville Art Show and the Norvill Art Prize. Right now she's preparing for a December showing at Michael Reid's Sydney gallery.

"I burst onto the art scene painting phosphorescent greens, because they're the colours of my childhood where I grew up, on a farm near Wilsons Creek," Lucy says.

Art is a second career for the 37-year-old, who once trained and worked as an interior architect. "When I was a child, I was painfully artistic and my parents said, 'You're going to be an artist when you grow up,'" Lucy says, remembering her early days at Mullumbimby School, where she felt she was the odd one out, but appreciated the grazing cattle over the school fence, and surfing and horseriding on the beach. >





CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT Looking from the cottage towards the shearing sheds and Mount Mullins; Lucy's painting apron; heading for a drawing session down the road to Merriwa, "where fearless Miffy chases the roos that jump in front of us — and sheep if she gets a chance"; taking a break in the hut that has become a studio. FACING PAGE *The Flexibility of Time*, a work in progress.



PEOPLE WILLOW TREE NSW

Lucy and Miffy in one of the
Millers Creek paddocks.

“I didn’t want to be a poor, starving artist and rebelled against that by becoming an interior architect,” Lucy says. “I struggled with the formal structure of the occupation, but all that professional training and relating with clients has enhanced my capacity as an artist.”

Lucy is inspired by overseas travel to New York, France and, last year, Germany, but it’s the solitude, changing light and animals in her country sojourns that are the mainstays of her work. “It was at Millers Creek that I learnt to really immerse myself in solitude and silence.” She enjoys long walks, “trying to avoid the brown snakes and the bulls” with Miffy the dachshund: “There’s just something about the hills around here.”

But Lucy is also engaged with the feet-on-the-ground everyday life at the station. “I like to spend time with the shearers in the sheds and look forward to painting a shearing series with a nod to Tom Roberts,” she says. “The shed has that heady and comforting lanolin aroma.”

Recent unexpected rain has lifted everyone’s spirits and Lucy is ready to celebrate. “I want to paint the joy

and beauty of rain, purple skies and the about-to-be-wet world,” she says. The date in *Crossing The Dawson, 1864* is a reference to a famous flood ending a drought cycle.

Inside the studio, unfinished works lean against exposed tongue-and-groove walls, or lie on the floor, while the canvas Lucy is working on is placed on an easel. A vivid red base is worked and reworked with layers of colour to build Turner-like skies, and figurative references of sheep, cattle, deer, a working dog or a solitary tree.

Memories of landscapes seen or felt converge, merge and evolve, and Lucy continues working until the painting feels good. The words of David Fairbairn, one of her drawing tutors at the National Art School, often come to mind: “If a painting is dead and not moving, then I do something until it vibrates, there’s a hum and it starts to sing.” *

Lucy is represented by Michael Reid. Her next exhibition will be at his gallery in Elizabeth Bay, Sydney, December 2–19. For more information, telephone (02) 8353 3500 or visit michaelreid.com.au



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august

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August is the month for daffodils.

garden wisdom

If you're serious about gardening, you know that beauty and pests go together like war and peace. No cherries without cherry slug; fruit without ravenous birds; kale without snails; nor, a rose without thorns. Which is why, even allowing for the odd rant and rave when pests get the best of you, gardening begets balance, practicality and wisdom. I wish more young people were interested in gardening. Pretty soon life's obsession with perfection falls away when the gardener realises there can be no such thing.

August is the month to appreciate daffodils in all their glorious variety. They're one of the reasons I bought my house, seeing them scattered across the front paddock as I drove up. Wild daffodils thrill in the country. You know where people have been a generation ago: even if there's no sign of house, village, or even a town, the daffodil survives, marking the gates of lost homes. That's the beauty of August. There is peril, too: leaf curl in peach and nectarine trees. Before there's any sign of foliage, now is the time to get ready with old-fashioned Bordeaux and Burgundy — not wines, but recipes for non-toxic sprays. Get to it, if you want to save your peaches.

Words by Hilary Burden, author of A Story of Seven Summers (Allen & Unwin, \$29.99).

WHEN THE COUNTRY COMES TO THE CITY

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LABOURS OF LOVE: AUSTRALIAN QUILTS

1850–2015 7th–October 5th More than 30 stunning handcrafted textiles made in NSW at the Hazelhurst Regional Gallery and Arts Centre in Gympie. (02) 8536 5700; hazelhurst.com.au

BABY ET LULU AT BUNDANON TRUST

23rd Abby Dobson and Lara Goodridge perform classic and contemporary French songs at the Boyd Education Centre in Illaroo. Adults, \$35. Bookings essential. (02) 4422 2100; bundanon.com.au

WENTWORTH SHOW 29th–30th

Sheep and wool displays, shearing competitions, dog trials, trade exhibits and sideshows, not to mention a fun

treasure hunt and animal nursery for children. Adults, \$18, children, \$6. (03) 5027 6304; wentworthshow.org.au

NORTHERN TERRITORY

ARNHEMLAND BIRD WEEK

16th–22nd Hosted by the Arnhemland Barramundi Nature Lodge. Guides take groups out to the Maningrida area, which many regard as Australia's premier birdwatching landscape. Bookings essential. (08) 8983 1544; arnhemlandbirds.com.au

ALICE DESERT FESTIVAL

27th–September 6th Performances celebrate the desert and its rich cultural landscape. Tickets from \$5. (08) 8952 2392; alicedesertfestival.com.au

QUEENSLAND

GEMFEST FESTIVAL OF GEMS 6th–9th

Anakie in central Queensland plays host to this annual festival, with the glimmering stones — especially local sapphires — on show alongside food and entertainment. Tickets from \$10. (07) 4985 4375; gemfest.com.au

MOUNT ISA MINES ROTARY RODEO

7th–9th Get to Mount Isa for non-stop rodeo action, where the outback meets the grit of a mining town. Tickets from \$40. (07) 4743 2706; isarodeo.com.au

GYMPIE MUSIC MUSTER 27th–30th

Camp in the beautiful Amamoor Creek State Forest Park, two hours north of Brisbane, and catch the biggest acts in country music. Bookings recommended. 1300 438 849; muster.com.au

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

BAROSSA GOURMET WEEKEND

14th–16th Food and wine experiences, markets and more in the Barossa Valley. Book for classes, long lunches and dinners, and the traditional Winery Days. 1300 852 982; barossa.com

STRATHALBYN ANTIQUES FAIR 15th–16th

A weekend for collectors, hobbyists and antiques lovers, with events throughout Strathalbyn. Entry from \$10. 0427 674 620; slta.asn.au

TASMANIA

CHOCOLATE WINTERFEST 9th

This delicious festival in Latrobe invites chocoholics to taste, mould, sip and decorate their favourite treat. Includes a lantern parade and plenty of tastings in the perfect season for hot chocolate. (03) 6421 4650; chocolatewinterfest.com.au

VICTORIA

CAMELLIA & GARDEN SHOW 15th–16th

Mount Waverley Community Centre showcases the beautiful winter camellias in the annual Victorian Championships. Entry is \$5. 0412 914 388; camelliasvic.org.au

LORNE ARTS FESTIVAL 28th–30th

Head to the picturesque seaside town to catch some of Australia's best cabaret, circus, theatre, comedy, visual arts and music events. Some bookings required. 1300 365 901; lovelorne.com.au

FRANKSTON AND SOUTH EASTERN WINE

SHOW 30th Homemade wines crafted from fruit, vegetables, flowers, herbs and grapes are on show in Mount Martha on the Mornington Peninsula. Sample wines made from parsnips, berries, guavas, carrots and other exotic ingredients. (03) 5975 5757; fawg.org.au

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

BALINGUP MEDIEVAL CARNIVALE

22nd–23rd Begin the historical weekend with a feast on the Friday evening, ahead of the Carnivale's 100 market stalls and family-friendly entertainment, including parades and

Saturday night's burning of the dragon.

Daily tickets, \$15. 0498 088 093; balingupmedievalcarnivale.com.au

TASTE OF CHITTERING 23rd

Celebrate the Chittering area's citrus growing history with wine tastings, gourmet food, market stalls and family entertainment at Lower Chittering, north of Perth. (08) 9576 4600; chittering.wa.gov.au

THREE SPRINGS WILDFLOWER SHOW AND ART EXHIBITION 27th–30th

Three Spring's community hall will be displaying gorgeous regional plants, including wild orchids, plus paintings and pottery by local artists. (08) 9954 1276; threesprings.wa.gov.au

SHINJU MATSURI FESTIVAL OF THE PEARL

28th–September 6th An exciting whirlwind of colour, sound, taste and scents when Broome celebrates its pearling history. (08) 9192 6461; shinjumatsuri.com.au

Please send your event news to austcountrystyle@news.com.au.

Events may change and we recommend contacting the organisers to confirm details and ensure availability.

3rd–4th

SHEEPVENTION Last year this exhibition in Hamilton, Victoria, drew 25,000 visitors to the sheep show, alpaca show, inventions competition and wool fashion parade. Adults, \$20. (03) 5572 2563; hamiltonshowgrounds.com.au





LAURA GEITZ AUSTRALIAN NETBALL CAPTAIN

Despite winning championships across the globe, this star athlete tells Claire Mactaggart that a farm in Queensland's Darling Downs is calling her home.



CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE
The family get ready for the Allora Show Ball; "With my poddy calf, Charlotte — she was adorable!"; Carla and Laura (right), aged five; the four-year-old riding her blue toy pony, Buttons — "I didn't really like wearing dresses, but Mum obviously dressed me up on this particular day."

A 'cuppa' features prominently in the memories of Laura Geitz; whether it was poured from an old teapot at the kitchen table or enjoyed from a Thermos in a paddock on the family farm near Allora, almost 2½ hours south-west of Brisbane.

It was a daily ritual for the family — parents Ross and Juanita, and older sister Carla. "It was always an occasion when Dad came home from out working and said, 'I'm going to put the billy on.' Then we'd sit down and have smoko together," Laura says.

Although the 27-year-old is based in Brisbane, and travels regularly as captain of the Australian Diamonds Netball team and the Queensland Firebirds, she loves to return to the family grain and cattle property on the Darling Downs at weekends. Last year, Laura and husband Mark Gilbride, a former professional rugby union player, purchased 105 hectares of the property and hope to raise a family there. "I still call Allora home and I love the thought of one day putting up a little cottage there," Laura says. "I'd love nothing better than for my children to grow up in a small country town and have that link back home."

From the very start, Laura was hooked by netball. "When I was 14 and had just started playing, I said to Mum, 'I'm going to play netball for Queensland and Australia.' Mum said, 'Oh jeez, that's a bit of a stretch — how are you going to get there?' I said, 'I don't know, but I'll get there!'"

Laura soon found a way and was representing Queensland and Australia at the under-17 level. She became captain of the Australian Institute of Sport Darters in 2007, and in 2011, with the Firebirds, won the ANZ Championship, followed by the World Championships with the Diamonds. Another career highlight came last year when the Diamonds won gold at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.

Laura and Mark were married in 2012, and together they market a range of netball apparel and equipment. Just months after their wedding, Laura's father Ross was killed in a farm accident. "He was the most wonderful person and role model, a genuine, hardworking and kind-hearted man... I hope I carry some of those values," she says.

Laura will lead the Australian team to the Netball World Cup in Sydney this month.

“**I GREW UP** on a 445-hectare grain and cattle property three kilometres south of Allora with Mum, Dad and my sister Carla, who is three years older. It's a beautiful little town and I absolutely loved it there.

Dad grew up in the little cottage on the property. He later ran the property in partnership with his brother Barry. They got rid of the dairy side of things, and moved into cattle and grain, and added on and bought surrounding properties. My sister now lives where Dad grew up, so her children are the fourth generation to live in that house.

Our houses were on the ridge country on higher ground and that's where we ran the cattle, while Glengallan Flat was our fertile cropping ground. It's a pretty part of the world and we had neighbours close by, so we grew up with a lot of kids from the other families. There were lots of horses and trail riding, as well as motor bikes at an early age! I loved my horses and I used to ride quite a bit as a kid. >





FROM LEFT Sisters ready for school; Laura, Carla and Penny the pony; Toby the collie kelpie-cross — “the most loyal, loving dog”. BELOW Laura’s first day at preschool.

“The biggest thing about growing up in a small community is accepting everyone for who they are.”

The biggest thing about growing up in a small community is accepting everyone for who they are. You learn not to judge a book by its cover... they become your extended family and are there to help.

I always loved being outdoors; I was definitely a tomboy and enjoyed going to the cattle sales with Dad — that was one of my favourite things to do in the school holidays. I loved animals from a young age and still do — I was always surrounded by them, whether it was my dogs, or poddy calves I’d bring home from the sales, or chooks. If there was ever any injured wildlife around the farm, it always found its way into my care. With animals to care for each day, growing up on a farm instills a lot of responsibility.

I spent most of my afternoons after school with Dad, and on weekends we went mustering, branding or tagging — I really loved that side of things. Dad had strong black tea and I used to love to take a Thermos up the

paddock to him with eight teaspoons of sugar in it! It was a novelty to have such sweet tea.

Family was always the most important thing, and every day we were surrounded by each other. We’d turn the telly off and have every evening meal together around the table. Sunday mornings were spent at church and then we might go for a drive in the afternoon.

We were very lucky: we had wide open rolling spaces but it wasn’t isolated or too far from anywhere. I went to Allora State School until year seven. The bus ran past our house and it was a five-minute ride into town. I later went to The Scots PGC College in Warwick and it was still quite easy — a 40-minute bus trip.

I was always very active and loved sport — tennis, swimming and athletics. I remember thinking I’d love to go to the Olympics one day. I was extremely competitive but also very shy, and playing sport was

my way of coming out a little bit. In the sporting arena I could be someone else.

But then there was always the side of me that loved the country so much, and I remember saying to Dad, when I was a young girl, ‘There’s no way I’ll ever marry anyone from the city, Dad!’ He said, ‘You can’t help who you fall in love with.’ Then I said, ‘Yeah, but I’m never moving from the country. I just couldn’t do it.’

Because I love animals, I’d thought about being a vet. But from about age 16, my netball picked up, and that’s really when the journey began and took me away. I used to watch the clock and didn’t want the game to finish because I just loved playing it so much. Mum always went above and beyond; she used to take me here, there and everywhere, and we spent a lot of time in the car. I had a passion for netball straight up and remember thinking, ‘This is the game I want to play forever.’ ”



ABOUT ALLORA

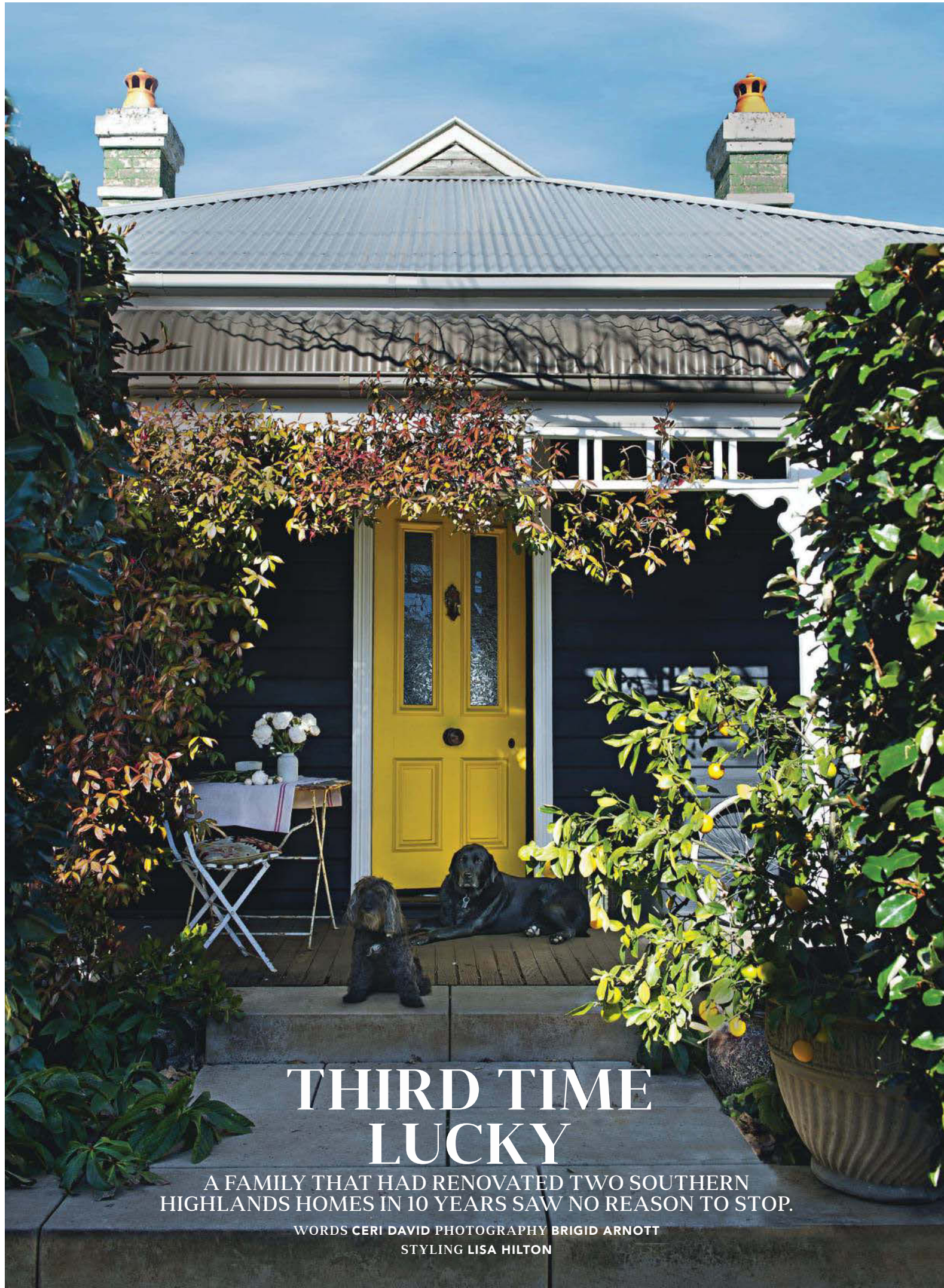
On the New England Highway between Warwick and Toowoomba, Allora started out as a shepherds’ crossing on Dalrymple Creek. In 1884, a fossil find at Dalrymple Creek became known as the Talgai Skull: estimated to be 9000–10,000 years old, it was the first evidence of early human inhabitation of Australia. Agriculture has remained a mainstay of the region and the small farming community now has a population of almost 900. The town has some historic buildings, including the timber St David’s Anglican church, built in 1888. Known as ‘Mary Poppins House’, 61 Herbert Street is where Helen Goff grew up, later writing her famous children’s books under the pseudonym P. L. Travers.



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THIRD TIME LUCKY

A FAMILY THAT HAD RENOVATED TWO SOUTHERN
HIGHLANDS HOMES IN 10 YEARS SAW NO REASON TO STOP.

WORDS CERI DAVID PHOTOGRAPHY BRIGID ARNOTT
STYLING LISA HILTON

BOWRAL NSW HOME

A kelim from Cadrys Contemporary Rugs in Sydney and a rug from Mittagong's Silkwood Trading Company lead past the English clock that was a wedding present, an antique cherry-wood table, and a vintage Vox Populi lamp from Bowral's Suzie Anderson Home. FACING PAGE Lulu the spoodle and labrador Monty by the front door painted with Dulux Midas Touch.





It's the kind of day Bowral does best: crisp and bright, with a handful of trees still dressed in their autumn colours and a big blue sky stretching overhead. Tucked behind a hedgerow, a stone's throw from the Bradman Museum, Susie and Gavin Martin's weatherboard cottage is a hive of activity. Monty and Lulu (a labrador and spoodle) welcome visitors as 16-year-old Matilda Martin heads out on her bike with a friend. Gavin has just returned from delivering brownies to the cafés that Susie bakes for.

"The good news is that they sell by the tray, so you can't actually take a piece. It's enforced discipline," he says, laughing as he retreats for his regular Saturday afternoon snooze. "If you hear snoring, just ignore me."

Susie is in her element. "My favourite times are when the house is full and a bit chaotic," she declares — which is certainly true this weekend with sons, Harry, 22 and Olly, 19, both back from university for a home-cooked meal.

The Martins moved from Sydney to the Southern Highlands in 2001 when the children were young. Susie has fond memories of her own rural upbringing in Merriwa, in the Upper Hunter region, while Gavin's early life was spent moving where his father's international banking job took them, including the UK and several parts of the West Indies. Both agreed they wanted space and stability when raising their own children. "It's probably the best thing we ever did," Susie says. "We felt it would be so much nicer for them than growing up as city kids with just a little patch of grass. The schools are good. They could climb trees, and camp out overnight and get dirty. They needed that freedom."

Fourteen years on, this is their third home in the area, having bought and renovated twice before. The original cottage was built around the 1870s and belonged to a vet and his wife who were friends of the Martins.

"They were far more interested in being outdoors with animals than focusing on the house," Susie says. "And we'd always thought it was cute, with so much potential." When their friends unexpectedly decided to sell in late 2010, the Martins jumped at the chance — and devoted the next six months to renovations before moving in.

At the time, there were two bedrooms in the house, along with a third in a separate building at the end of the garden. "It was all quite beige, and fairly dark," says Susie, leafing through photograph albums of their home's progress from caterpillar to butterfly. "For natural light in Bowral, you really need to look north, and unfortunately all this back area is south-facing."

Their first priority, then, was to extend into the garden, increasing the size of the living area and the master bedroom while letting in much more sunlight. They capitalised on this with bi-folds running the length of the living area and glass-panelled internal doors.

Next, a laundry was slotted between the house and the garden building, which was converted into two bedrooms, a bathroom and a study, and became a wing for the two boys. These days the study is used by Gavin, who splits his working week in commercial real estate between >

Susie planned the freestanding kitchen wall that hides a walk-through pantry. The glass splashback protects the Cole & Son wallpaper in Cow Pasture that Susie "brought back from London as hand luggage". **FACING PAGE, FROM TOP** Susie and Monty outside the main living area; a cushion from the UK on a chair that was a gift, and a cowhide footrest from Sydney's Orson & Blake.





BOWRAL NSW HOME

An African headdress beside a painting by Sarah Bishop from Susie's hometown of Merriwa, and other art collected from around the world. The cushions were purchased in the UK, and the armchair from a former Bowral antiques shop.

"I LIKE ONE-OFFS. THINGS THAT ARE OLD AND NOT MADE ANYMORE..."



HOME BOWRAL NSW

In the main bedroom, two paintings by Goulburn's Jenny Bell offset a headboard covered in an embroidered crewel fabric, and a stool from Sydney's Persian Rug Gallery. FACING PAGE, CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT Charcoal drawings by Jenny Bell above a Turkish wooden bowl; a wire sculpture bought at a country fair sits beside an Adirondack chair; a little clay dog by Bowral's Heidi McGeoch stands above a basket-like antique grain sieve, and beside skis that Susie bought for Gavin at Thredbo.

ABOUT THE HOUSE

- Dulux Natural White is the backdrop used to show off the rich, earthy tones of the decor. 132 525; dulux.com.au.
- Gavin has made painting the exterior of their home his ongoing hobby, using Taubman's Black Fox on the exterior walls. 131 686; taubmans.com.au.
- Dirty Jane's Emporium & Antique Market is a treasure trove of used furniture, homewares and bric-a-brac. It's also where to find Suzie Anderson Home. (02) 4861 3231; dirtyjanes.com.
- Susie's kitchen design, with the hidden pantry, was built by Elouera Woodworks from nearby Mittagong. (02) 4871 3714.
- Susie is studying interior design, and hopes to help others with their homes when she finishes at the end of the year, under the name Yellow Stripe Interiors.
- The garden received an instant kickstart with mature field-grown trees from Treekeepers Nursery, 0407 611 349, treekeepers.com.au. Other plants come from The Potting Shed, which also stocks pots, furniture and fire pits. 0419 154 860, thepottingshedbowral.com.





Sydney and home, and Susie, who's studying interior design. The large, open-plan living hub is an example of her already considerable skills.

"I knew that if everything was going to happen in this room, I didn't want the kitchen to take over," she says. Hence the pantry and all appliances are cleverly hidden from sight at the far end — "And that's also why I chose glass rather than a tiled splashback."

The kitchen flows into a dining area with a large table, and then on to the living room, where the fireplace takes centre stage, nudging the television into a supporting role off to one side. "We love having the fire going," Susie says. "It gets well below zero in the winter mornings."

Susie and Gavin kept the original tongue-and-groove lining boards, which they loved, though they were less keen on the yellow paint job, swapping that for white throughout. They were also able to match the existing kauri pine floors before re-staining. "They scratch quite badly, but I don't mind — it gives an aged look," says Susie, pointing out a trail of stiletto imprints made during her 50th birthday party, not long after moving in.

The white walls and dark floors are an ideal blank canvas for furniture and art that are rich in colour and texture, with feathers, coral, metal and leather all thrown into the mix. "I like one-offs," Susie says. "Things that are old and not made anymore, or crafted pieces that are a bit more bespoke."

As well as providing Bowral cafés with baked goods, Susie works at Suzie Anderson Home, a French homewares and furniture shop located in Dirty Jane's Emporium & Antique Market. But while daily immersion in such beautiful things might be tempting, the Martins acquired most of the home's contents years ago. There are souvenirs from holidays, paintings by family and friends, maps of places they've lived. Far from being 'curated' to create a particular look, everything has been accumulated organically, combining to tell the story of their lives so far.

"The word 'eclectic' is used far too often these days," Susie says. "But it's the only one that fits." *





LONGREACH QUEENSLAND HOME

Boyd Webb believes
Weewondilla means "wild
blue flower". **FACING PAGE**
Four-year-old Topsy gives big
sister Phoebe, six, a hug.

long road home

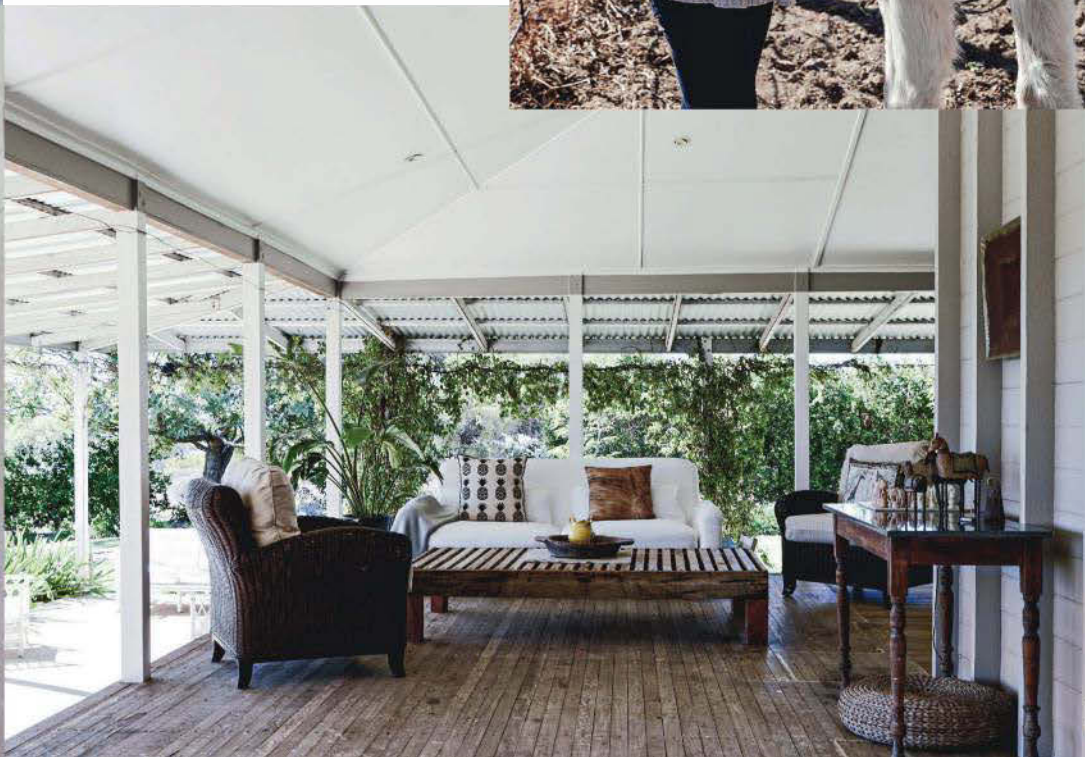
**THE WEBB FAMILY ENJOYS A LOVELY OLD HOUSE THAT
MADE A 100-KILOMETRE JOURNEY TO REACH THEM.**

WORDS VIRGINIA IMHOFF PHOTOGRAPHY MICHAEL WEE





CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT
The homestead wreathed in Virginia creeper and spider lilies; Phoebe with her pony Petals; around the old wool classing bench turned coffee table is an IKEA sofa with cushions from online site Everingham & Watson, and Spinifex Collections in Longreach; family photographs face hat racks from Spinifex Collections; squatters chairs on the polished concrete verandah that was added after the house arrived. FACING PAGE, FROM TOP Katie about to send Boyd and the girls on a ride; timber fretwork over the doorway to a guest bedroom and a table with driftwood legs from Spinifex Collections.





It's a dusty drive out to Weewondilla through the vast parched landscape of central-west Queensland. Ninety-odd kilometres north of Longreach, the flat-to-the-horizon grassy downs have given way to more undulating country with small pebbly rises, the occasional flat-topped hill and a sprinkling of trees. The road is empty and in no time it seems, the sign to the property appears ahead.

This is the home of Katie and Boyd Webb, and their children — Phoebe, six, Topsy, four, and one-year-old Tilly. Turning in the gateway and following Katie's directions to "go over two grids until you see a road to your left", we take a track sidling a stony rise. At the top, the house sits in a garden shaded by African mahogany, poinciana, olive, Burdekin plum and neem trees. It's a patch of green amid the dull, grey-brown wash that drought has painted over the wider central west.

Newly married, Boyd and Katie were living in a station cottage when they heard about a house on a property north of Muttaborra, more than 100 kilometres away, that was ready for removal. "We knew who owned it," Boyd says. "It had been the original house on the property, the earliest part was built in 1887; as their family grew, they added to it, but we were fortunate to be able to shift it here in one piece."

"It wasn't a big deal," Katie says. "I didn't see it happen, as I was at work and just came home to find it sitting on a truck on the top of the hill."

Boyd grew up at Weewondilla and now runs the 34,400-hectare property that his parents, Graham and Margie, bought in 1973. "It was settled in the 1880s and Dad bought the first 600 acres in 1973," Boyd says. From high up on the verandah the view of the property stretches away to the north to a group of low hills. "That's called Mount Mitchell," Boyd says, pointing to the largest of them. "As kids we used to ride out there on our ponies. Now we go out there to have dinner parties and drinks."

Katie grew up further south, on a sheep and cattle property called Mount Enniskillen between Blackall and Tambo, and arrived in Longreach as a teacher in 1998.

"When I left school I did a year of nursing, then a teaching degree in Brisbane and came out to Longreach," she says. "Boyd and I met in the pub — it was the Longreach Club then — and we got married in the garden at Mount Enniskillen in 2005."

Boyd's parents live in the main homestead at Weewondilla, where Boyd grew up with his three sisters and brother. The house has a schoolhouse behind it where Phoebe now does her Distance Education lessons.

For the past 10 years Katie and Boyd have gradually restored and refurbished the old home, while still >



declaring it “a work in progress”. “We haven’t done either of the bathrooms yet, or painted externally,” Katie explains.

The house had original french doors opening from the bedrooms and sitting room to a large verandah. “When we got the house, the whole verandah was enclosed,” Katie says. “We turned one side into the kitchen, and opened the rest up and extended it outwards — the verandah is now where we entertain.”

This favourite outdoor living area has comfortable sofas and cane chairs arranged around a coffee table made from an old wool classing bench that came from Katie’s childhood home — “Dad cut it down for us.”

They also opened up the sitting room by removing the wall between the entrance hall, polished the timber floorboards and put lining boards on the stud walls in three rooms. “A friend and I also built the cupboards,” Boyd says. “And Katie and I did some of the painting.”

Furniture is an easy mixing of old and contemporary. Many memory-evoking pieces were gifts or handed down by family. “The kitchen table I remember as a kid when it was in the old breezeway,” Boyd recalls. Other treasures have found a new life in their home, such as the kitchen chairs that Katie remembered from the Blackall Club when she was a child and which she bought, years later, and a table rescued from a boundary rider’s hut on the property.

It says much about this couple that one of their most prized pieces is a framed copy of the original handwritten draw for the 1959 Longreach polocrosse carnival. Both Katie and Boyd play polocrosse and, during the season, will often load the truck with horses and the children’s ponies, and head to carnivals around the region.

“It’s a good family sport, as everyone can play including the kids,” Katie says. “I could go out on the field and lead Topsy, but usually the kids all ride around on their ponies while the parents play.”

Boyd manages the family property, running sheep and cattle — although he says, “due to failed wet seasons our stock numbers have gone down”. Wild dogs have also caused sheep and lamb losses and Boyd has been building a dog fence around a section of the property.

Katie keeps the garden going with bore water but even then nature can be surprisingly fickle. A few weeks earlier a grasshopper plague came through and stripped it out, Katie says, as she points out the new foliage coming through on the trees and shrubs. “The grasshoppers were shocking here, and even worse in Longreach.”

Life on the land comes with challenges and hard times. For Katie and Boyd, however, creating their beautiful home may have been a prolonged labour of love, but the sanctuary it provides for their family is their best reward.

“We haven’t quite finished,” says Katie. “But we really love this house.” *



ABOUT THE HOUSE

- The Webbs painted most of the interior in Dulux Fair Bianca and one wall of the guest bedroom in Dulux Gull Grey. 132 525; dulux.com.au
- The fretwork panels in the door fanlights are original. Similar new products are made by Finlayson Timber & Hardware, 135 Wellington Road, East Brisbane. (07) 3393 0588; finlayson.com.au
- Katie loves Spinifex Collections, 118 Eagle Street, Longreach. (07) 4658 3636.
- The sitting-room sofa came from Freedom Furniture. 1300 135 588; freedom.com.au
- For anyone looking to relocate a house, David Wright Properties can move a home anywhere in Queensland. (07) 3888 2234; davidwright.com.au





CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE Some of the Webbs' polocrosse horses; heirloom photographs and an IKEA elephant print in the guest bedroom, above cushions and a quilt from Country Road; there are 20 horses on the property; in the main bedroom, an armchair that belonged to Boyd's mother; the horse sculptures that came from a Longreach gift shop. FACING PAGE, FROM TOP Steps on the side verandah, added since the move, lead to what was the original verandah; the airy kitchen is where the family takes all its meals.



See more great country bedrooms at homelife.com.au/country-bedrooms



ON FAMILIAR GROUND

AFTER LIVING ON THE PERFECT SPOT FOR 16 YEARS,
A FAMILY FINALLY BUILT THEIR DREAM HOME.

WORDS VIRGINIA IMHOFF PHOTOGRAPHY SHARYN CAIRNS
STYLING EMILY WARD



Built on a ridge line, the house is positioned to maximise the view.





There would be few scenes so serene and pastoral as the one that fills the enormous windows of Catherine and David Ritchie's home near Mansfield in north-east Victoria. A wide valley, dotted with stands of grand old red gums and grazing livestock, sweeps away below the house to a show-stealing backdrop of High Country mountains.

The house is new but the view is familiar. Catherine and David, and their two children — Polly, now 20, and Donald, 18 — had lived here for 16 years in their former home — and so it took a good deal of resolve to tear it down and start again five years ago. "We had a 1950s demountable house; it was quite attractive with big-paned windows looking out to Mount Buller," Catherine says. "We were reluctant to pull it down and debated keeping it — but we would have had to spend a lot of money. And clearly, this was the best site for a new place..."

Five years on, their timber home looks contemporary yet with a sense of belonging to its ridge-top site. The collection of flat-roofed boxes, and pavilions clad in silvering ship-lapped timber has tall north-facing windows that make the most of the view. Layers of time and owners usually give a home an innate sense of history, but for the Ritchies this house already resonates with fond associations and memories.

Russell Barrett, from Russell Barrett Architects in Melbourne, designed the house incorporating the Ritchie's specific requirements. "I was very influenced by Grimwade House, a home we spent a lot of summers in on the >

MANSFIELD VICTORIA HOME

Big red gums in the valley and distant mountains are on view from the dining area. FACING PAGE, CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT David laid the path of local mudstone leading to the door; Catherine and David, with Digory, a Cairn terrier-Jack Russell cross; the AGA stove was reinstated in the new house.



See more great country dining rooms at homelife.com.au/country-dining-rooms



MANSFIELD VICTORIA HOME

Stained and varnished plywood ceilings and timber bookshelf dividers give the sitting room a 1960s feel, as do the leather strap safari chairs, bought at auction. The vintage sideboard came from a clearing sale, and the painting above it is by Alfonso Puautjimi, from William Mora Galleries.





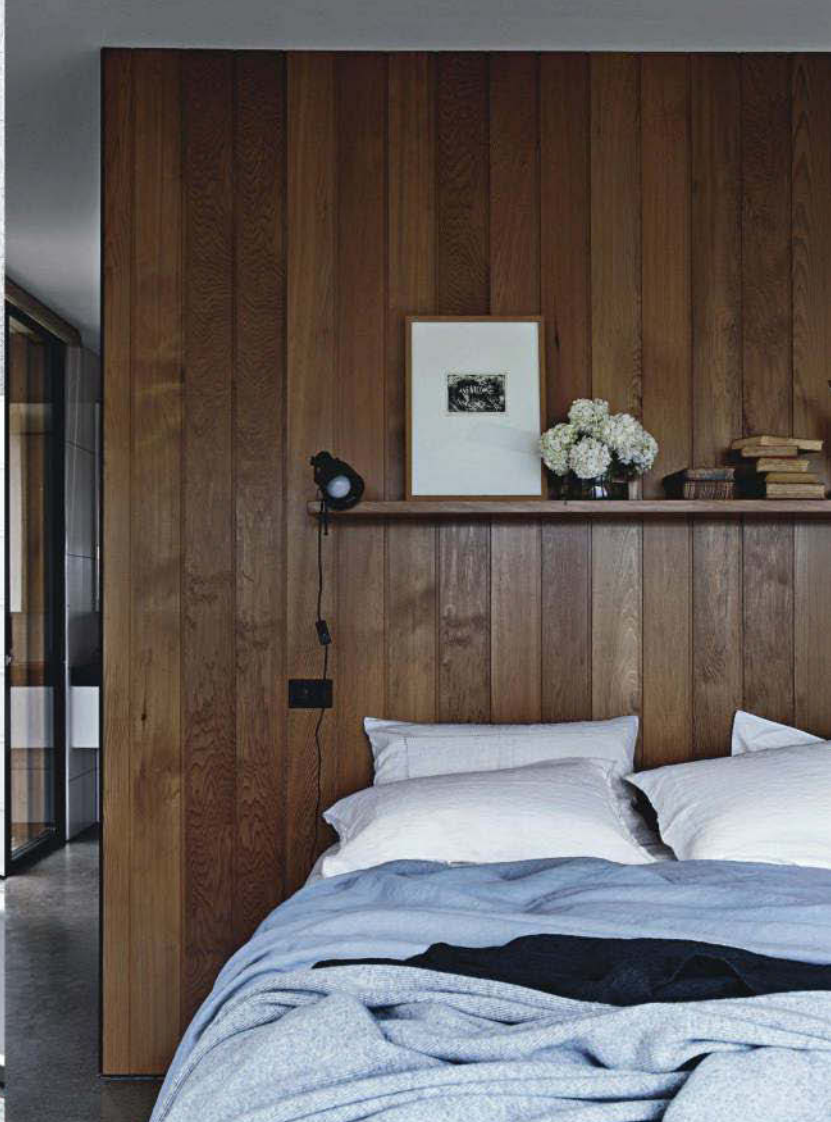
ABOUT THE HOUSE

- Dulux Natural White is used on all the interior walls that aren't timber-paneled. 132 525; dulux.com.au
- Inax green Japanese tiles in the kitchen splashback are from Artedomus in Melbourne. (03) 9428 9898, artedomus.com
- Custom-mixed tiles in the bath surround are On Trend from Signorino Tile Gallery in Victoria's Richmond. (03) 9427 9100; signorino.com.au
- The oriental rug in the sitting room was a wedding gift from Catherine's father and came from I & B Perryman Oriental Carpets in Sydney. (02) 9327 3910; antiquerugs.com.au
- The timber dining table was made by Rabbit Trap Timber in Bowral, NSW. The business specialises in handcrafted furniture made from aged timbers. 0432 214520; rabbittraptimbers.com.au
- Catherine and David have collected Indigenous artworks at William Mora Galleries in Melbourne. (03) 9429 1199; moragalleries.com.au
- The garden has matured under a succession of hands, including David and Catherine's. They commissioned James Pfeiffer Landscape Architects in Bowral to further design the garden when they were newly married. (02) 4861 6999.

**...THIS HOUSE ALREADY
RESONATES WITH FOND
ASSOCIATIONS AND MEMORIES.**



FROM LEFT Timber panelling, green ceramic tiles and a rescued bath from the old house; the main bedroom opens to the breezeway verandah and has a handy shelf for artwork — an etching by Brisbane-based Robyn Daw — and reading material. FACING PAGE A woven wall hanging above Polly's bed came from a trip to Arnhem Land.



Mornington Peninsula, and the house I grew up in had a very '60s organic look, with a lot of wood. I like wood — and I wanted this house to have a country look," she says.

Catherine grew up near Bungendore, in southern NSW, where her family had been on the land for generations. She became a journalist and was working for *The Sydney Morning Herald* when she encountered David. "We met at my cousin's 21st party in Braidwood and then got together at the cousin's wedding — we were married 21 years ago."

David's family has been in the Mansfield district for generations. His parents started Delatite Wines in 1968 and he grew up there. The home is on 40 hectares that was part of Delatite Station, and which he inherited from his uncle. Now a viticulturist, David runs the winery and vineyard, producing cool-climate biodynamic wine.

Yet Catherine recalls how dislocated she felt when she moved to north-east Victoria. "I had a strong sense of belonging where my family had been for 140 years and where I had a lot of friends," she says. However, Mansfield was welcoming and eventually started feeling like home. "Mansfield is a lovely community and I realised that I was lucky to be here..."

David and Catherine had already redone the bathroom and kitchen in the old home by the time they decided to demolish it, so they rescued the AGA stove and a new bath — "It's narrow and deep, and so doesn't use much water" — and moved into a rented house in town.

The building took 12 months, starting with a heated concrete slab. Catherine owned a property between

Bombala and Eden with her sister and she was keen for the timber cladding to come from there. "It's yellow box and I really love the colour of it. But getting it was a major drama as we had to put a road in to get it out."

Inside details were just as carefully considered. In the sitting room there's a Rumford fireplace — a tall shallow fireplace named after the 18th-century physicist Count Rumford — that's particularly efficient, and large areas of open shelving that serve both as a library and room dividers.

"When Russell saw how many books we had in every room, he designed these," Catherine says. "It's quite a '60s thing to have see-through shelves."

Most rooms have louvre windows and a gauze-enclosed breezeway verandah runs down the south side allowing the light and air to breath through the house. "In summer we open everything up to the verandah. And I love the way we can get a view right through the house to the garden ..."

The trusty AGA is once again the hub of the kitchen and, as Catherine points out, it's much more than just an oven for cooking. "We love it because it keeps the coffee warm, dries your ski clothes and it's always draped with washing and the cat. As our son Donald said, 'A house is not a home without an AGA.' It's like a friend."

And for someone who has always loved old homes, Catherine says they've never had any regrets about starting anew. "It's perfect for the two of us and expands when the family is at home — and it's perfect for this spot." *

For information about Delatite Wines, telephone (03) 5775 2922 or visit delatitewinery.com.au

CRAFT

heart felt

FROM WARMING WINTER
QUILTS TO DECORATIVE PLATE
COVERS, WOOL IS ONE OF THE
CRAFTER'S BEST FRIENDS.

PROJECTS, PHOTOGRAPHY
AND STYLING **CHINA SQUIRREL**





Woollen plate covers, see
page 56 for instructions.

PLATE COVERS

Dress up your dining table or make decorative plates for around the home using felted woollen fabric

You will need pure wool felt or you can recycle vintage woollen blankets (lightweight blankets are best). If using vintage blankets, you will need to put them through a felting process (see page 59 for instructions).

You can also dye the fabric for a variegated effect, as in the photographs. Use a dye suitable for wool and follow the manufacturer's instructions to mix the colour. Wet the blanket thoroughly and squeeze out excess water. Dip the blanket or piece of felt halfway into the dye, removing it when the colour is as deep as you

desire. (Remember that the colour will seem a lot darker when wet.) Carefully — the liquid will be hot — squeeze the excess dye into the undipped section of wool or felt, then squeeze out all the liquid. You may need to do this a few times until you achieve the desired affect. Allow the fabric to dry naturally.

For an even colour, simply immerse the entire piece in the dye, squeeze out excess liquid and allow to dry naturally. (NB To reduce shrinking, don't allow the dye liquid to boil.)

Now you are ready to cut the plate covers from the dyed fabric. Select the plates you would like to cover, place them upside down on pieces of paper and draw a template that is 1 cm larger all around than the plate. Cut out the

templates and pin them to the wool or felt. Cut out using fabric scissors. Repeat until you have two circles of felt for each plate.

Select the piece for the top of the plate cover, then fold its pair in half and cut across the fold to produce two semicircles. With wrong sides together, pin the two halves to the back of the top circle. Use a contrasting tapestry wool or 8-ply yarn and a darning needle to work blanket stitch around the edge of the circle, stitching the two layers together. Slip the plate into its cover through the slit underneath and use it as a charger under a plate on the dining table, or as a decorative plate on a coffee table or near the front door for your keys and small change.





WOOLLEN CUP WARMERS

These easy-to-make warmers are wonderful gifts and a great way to recycle an old woollen jumper. (If you don't have a favourite knit that's past its wear-by date, you can find them in op-shops and markets.) The jumper must be pure wool to ensure the wool felts properly (see page 59 for instructions on how to felt).

Once it is lightly felted, the sleeves cut easily into cup warmers (slip the sleeve over your cup to size and cut correctly) or you can cut strips from the jumper and stitch them together using tapestry wool or 8-ply woollen yarn. Use sharp scissors to cut a slit in the side of each warmer for the handle to fit through. You can now dye the cup warmer, if desired. >



Handmade ceramic cups by
Tara Burke. For stockist
details, see page 143.

WOOLLEN PATCHWORK QUILT

To make a quilt, you will need a selection of co-ordinated patterned and plain fabric pieces, cut into 22cm squares — see table below to work out the number of squares you'll need. We used felted woollen blankets (see facing page for instructions) and added pieces of vintage floral-print linen (optional).

Single 140 x 200cm 7 squares across x 10 down
Double 180 x 200cm 9 squares across x 10 down
Queen 220 x 220cm 11 squares across x 11 down
King 240cm x 220cm 12 squares across x 11 down

You will also need a piece of woollen fabric the size of the finished quilt top for the backing (sew together two lengths of narrower fabric or use an unfelted vintage blanket), and tapestry wool or 8-ply woollen yarn for blanket stitching the edges.

Lay the squares of fabric on the floor to work out the arrangement. Working with 2 squares at a time, put right sides together and stitch a 1cm seam by hand or machine, using sewing thread or embroidery floss. Sew the pieces together in crosswise sections and then sew the strips together until you have joined all the pieces.

Pin the quilt top to the backing fabric with wrong sides together, then use the woollen yarn to work blanket stitch around all the edges of the quilt. To secure the layers of the quilt together, you could also stitch through both layers at the corners of the joined sections and tie a knot, leaving short ends of yarn.



HOW TO FELT

Make sure the blanket or jumper you are planning to use is made from pure wool, with no acrylic.

Cut any fringe or binding from the blanket edges. Put the blanket or jumper in the washing machine and wash in hot water on a normal cycle (this will shrink and felt the item).

Dry in a tumble dryer on the hottest setting. Repeat the process of washing in hot water and tumble-drying as necessary until the wool has felted. *



This combination of felting and quilt-making gives new life to old woollen blankets.

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WINTER WARMERS

Winter has arrived with an almighty chill, the mornings are crisp and the evenings dark and quiet. No matter what the season, basic colours with a mix of textures and patterns can see out the seasons if chosen with some consideration. Warm leathers, rich patterned fabrics and hand crafted lighting add depth and warm our homes through the cooler months. Add layers to your interiors like those we add to our wardrobes, to make spaces feel cosy and inviting. Whether it is door handles or light fittings, accent pieces can easily be altered to update the look of your home appropriate to the time of year. Furniture is also a great way to keep any space up to date. It is easy to work with and keep on trend with the addition of a throw or by changing cushions or a rug. Exciting new ranges of furniture, fittings and home accessories are now in store and online at Schots Home Emporium, providing a range which makes updating or renewing the home an experience full of possibilities for every season.



a. Arched White Marble Mantle, square return (insert not included) b. Cafe Dining Chair in Natural Rustic Oak finish 41.5x53x88cm c. Round Braided Natural Jute Rug 1.5m d. Ystad Hand Painted Pendant Light in Beige and Grey 22x22x33cm e. Ystad Hand Painted Pendant Light in Light Blue 22x22x33cm f. Parisiens Arched Iron Mirror 80x4.5x159cm g. Caletta Leather Armchair in Outback Tan 74x91x89cm h. Spool of Twine with Scissors i. Valet in Weathered Oak and New York 24" Vanity in White (taps not included) j. Shoe last bookends k. Varenna Acid Wash Tile in Grey Marble 600x600x10mm l. Vintage Lever Basin Set in oil Rubbed Bronze (VELS: 5S/5.5L/m) m. Geometric Pressed Metal in Raw finish 2000x967x0.6mm n. Cagney Bar Stool in Natural Elm and Iron 32x32x76cm

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winner's circle

MANY FINE ENTRIES TESTED THE JUDGES,
BUT THE \$5000 PRIZE HAS BEEN AWARDED.

Her childhood spent on a sheep property in northern Victoria stood Donna Coutts in good stead when she wrote this year's winning story, *Flood*. "I've never entered a short story competition before — this is the first time I've written fiction in my adult life," explains Donna, a journalist who has worked on Melbourne's *Herald Sun*.

This mother of four decided to enter the competition after her youngest child, Harry, started school earlier this year. "With four young children, our house is always very busy so it was a good opportunity to do something when he went to school," she says. Speaking of her childhood experience of rural floods, Donna says, "Natural disasters don't happen in a vacuum... And a crisis, whether it's a natural disaster or something more domestic in scale, can bring out the best in people."

The judging process once again benefited from the expert help of Cate Kennedy, whose latest short story collection is *Like A House On Fire* (Scribe Publications, \$27.99). "I liked the tone and compression of *Flood* — and that dead-on accuracy of how life in a country town works," Cate says.

finalists

Untitled by Isobel Armstrong of Leederville, WA

Branching Out by Louella Evans of
Strathmore, Victoria

The Tenant of Tight Spaces by Michael Trevor
Lill of Murwillumbah, NSW

Just the Two of Us by Brooke Linford
of Bairnsdale, Victoria

Branching Out by Cree Marshall
of White Cliffs, NSW

The Van Gogh Trees by Susan Yardley
of Woodend, Victoria



flood

DONNA COUTTS LIVES IN MACLEOD, ON THE NORTHERN EDGE OF MELBOURNE, BUT THIS STORY IS INFORMED BY HER UPBRINGING IN RURAL VICTORIA.

Vida wasn't there. There was a space in the room between Carol and Jean that should have been filled by Vida.

Vida not here?

No, Jean, Vida's not here.

Carol leaned a little into the space where Vida should have been and Jean rearranged skeins of fluoro wool and polystyrene balls to take up Vida's portion of the trestle.

One o'clock Tuesdays at the Memorial Hall. That was Craft. They weren't getting the numbers anymore but Carol, Jean, Vida and maybe four others were there every week — save for Jean's annual trip up north.

Vida wasn't there because she'd left. Left Craft. Left town. Left Terry. Left the grandkids with Terry. Left them all in the lurch.

Hot air fell out of the hall into the morning when Terry opened the big doors on Friday. The committee came for an hour at 10, and hung pastel balloons, and washed cups and saucers, clucking and flashing him tight little smiles. By midday, Terry had put chairs around the walls, filled electric urns, broken up cobwebs in the toilets and swept the floorboards, which could use a bit of love. Back home he arranged Anzacs he'd made on Vida's Royal Doulton. Stood back to assess his work. The bikkies looked not unlike Vida's, though he suspected the Doulton was only for sandwiches.

Vida settled herself across two-thirds of the coach seat. Country Mints in the net pocket, *That's Life* on her knee, crochet bag at her feet. Cousin Gloria had worked herself into a state when Vida rang, thinking she was landing on her any minute. But Adelaide was 11 hours plus, according to the driver.

Vida hadn't seen Gloria since Leanne's wedding and Gloria had looked a little brassy even then. When they were

girls, Gloria epitomised glamour. She epitomised freedom the day she'd driven off to Adelaide with that bloke who played guitar in a band that was on the radio. The farthest Vida got was Warracknabeal, for Miss Showgirl 1963.

The thought of Leanne's wedding made her sick to her stomach. So much money. So much kerfuffle. All over a handful of years, her and Terry left to bring up Leanne's kids. You were supposed to think ill of the man but Vida couldn't see he'd done wrong but choose an impossible wife. Leanne was a disappointment. You shouldn't say that about your daughter. But no one was going to know Vida had thought it.

First hint of hard times and Leanne had hitchhiked out, quick as look at you. Leanne, the image of Terry, standing on the front lawn that last day spinning yarns about spreading her wings, branching out, finding herself.

Find herself. Vida would have drawn her a map if she'd thought it would help.

She looked at her watch. Five thirty. Tea should be on. Kids in the bath. Stories read. And tonight the Deb Ball.

She sent Terry good thoughts. When she dreamed of this day, she pictured him home, managing. Didn't want to see him fail, just couldn't do it herself one more day. She hadn't pictured him at the Deb without her. Maybe Carol would step in. Carol would like that.

Terry was supposed to say something to start the Deb Ball. Congratulate the committee. Compliment the girls.

He cleared his throat, strained against his collar. He was sinewy anyway, but when nervous, the tendons stood out around his neck like the roots of an old box tree.

He looked down at his slacks, lined up knife-sharp creases with floorboards. Vida's creases. Every day, except for funerals and the Deb, Terry wore Wrangler jeans and Vida ironed a crease in those, too.

Vida. She'd left a note propped against the sauce. She hadn't said anything, really, except she'd gone to her cousin's. She hoped Terry would do all right without her.

Oh, Vida.

He was Terry. The handy-ish bloke who had taught every teenager in town the Pride of Erin for 30 years but had never looked after a child or kept house in his life.

Vida. Darl.

Vida had that woolly mouth you get from daytime sleeping. Her folded cardigan had pressed lines in her cheek. Hadn't the foggiest where she was. Then it came back. Packing a bag. Pulling the door to. Getting on the first bus, then another. Away from tired, used-up old Vida.

You couldn't tell in the frigid air of the interstate coach that it had turned humid. The rain began halfway to Adelaide. It came in big bucketfuls across the windscreen. The coach seemed cosier then. A Country Mint and a spot of crochet, and things began to feel more like a holiday.

Terry cleared his throat twice, maybe three times more as the dings of the first big drops hit the hall roof. You could hear them smack the footpath out the front, too. The hot smell of rain rushed through the doors.

He always started with Vida in his list of thank-yous. What would Vida want him to do?

The drops were so close together once he spoke, no-one heard what he said, anyhow. And Vida wasn't here. By midnight, the stragglers were gone, dishes done. Jean and Carol packed leftover sponges and pavs for Terry to take to the hospital tomorrow. The kids slept across chairs in the darkest corner of the hall and Terry didn't know how he'd carry them to the car without them getting soaked. But he had to. And he did.

Postcards of Adelaide showed big, blue sky. Today rain fell out of it. A few churches and a browse through Myer, then Vida sat in a cafe with four points of sandwiches, watching the rain. There was a menswear sale. And 25 per cent off children's shoes but no way to see if they would fit.

So she drank tea and made the four points last and wondered if the kids had noticed her gone.

Craft wasn't on next Tuesday. On account of the rain. And the news, which was full of pictures of Queenslanders clinging to rooftops in the Lockyer Valley, Toowoomba, Grantham. Thirty-five people died.

The rain kept on down south. Terry strung up a washing line under the carport where Vida had asked for one since Leanne was little.

It rained all Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. ABC switched to emergency services broadcasting. The power

substation flooded, so Terry put batteries in a transistor radio or sat in the car to listen.

By Friday, nothing was on but filling sandbags, buildings levees, fuelling generators every four hours, making sandwiches at the hall. And waiting for the next thing to happen. They evacuated the hospital up to the high school before teatime.

Vida waited too. She waited out the flood at Gloria's in front of daytime TV with breaking news scrolling across the bottom of the screen.

She waited while the flood broke river-height records for the Avoca, Loddon, Wimmera and Campaspe; while it swamped Charlton and Rochester; while it trickled through the dirt levee at Kerang and lapped at the six-kilometre levee Warracknabeal built with about 50,000 air-dropped sandbags; while it formed an inland sea 55 kilometres wide and caused two billion dollars damage.

Then Vida waited by the side of the road for the tractor that Jean's son said was the only way through. She waited out the tractor's crawl in first gear along the submerged road.

After a time she picked out a thin brown horizon

where the water met the levee. Nine days after the peak and that glacial, stinking flood still lapped no more than the width of her hand from the top.

And then Vida stood on the road into town. She'd driven it her entire life but never stood on it, never walked it. There was no-one to greet her. She walked.

Terry wasn't there. No answer to her yoo-hoo as she climbed the back steps.

She looked for changes. Her Tasmania tea towel kept for best was in a damp ball on the bench. She saw that mostly, things were the same. Lunchboxes washed, upturned on the drainer. Sheets and little T-shirts flapping on the line outside. The news had told her all these days about crisis and loss. Dreams of hairdos and shopping and cappuccinos floated away on the rising tide. Her nightmares were apocalyptic. Children swimming just out of reach. Terry drowning, not in domestic responsibility.

The note said AT THE HALL.

And there they were. Kids in pyjamas, tangled together, chirping over something unbelievable in *Ripley's Believe It Or Not*. Terry was there, by the trestles, head bowed, cutting a loaf of white-bread sandwiches. He moved to the urn. Filled it up. Plugged it in. Arranged cakes on a plate. Steadied his trembling hand on the edge of the sink.

Vida was here. *

LEFT THE GRANDKIDS WITH TERRY. LEFT THEM ALL IN THE LURCH.



a new path

SEEKING A SAFE COUNTRY HOME FOR THEIR CHILDREN,
A COUPLE LEFT THE UK TO JOIN FAMILY IN TASMANIA.

WORDS HILARY BURDEN PHOTOGRAPHY CLAIRE TAKACS

MAYBERRY TASMANIA GARDEN

From left, yellow *Phlomis russeliana*, orange geum, silver *Artemisia* 'Powis Castle', foxgloves and lupins, *Phaiophleps nigricans*, *Sisyrinchium striatum* 'Aunt May', golden oregano, and silver-leafed *Verbascum thapsus*, all in front of a copse of silver birch.





Lars and Sarah Cooper are proof that when you live in the middle of nowhere, and you're committed to country living, there's always something going on. Their beautiful and productive garden is constantly calling, as is the dramatic view of the Great Western Tiers that span their boundary.

The couple met on the other side of the world, in Reading, England, where Sarah worked as an optometrist and Lars was a school greenkeeper. Sarah smiles as she remembers falling in love with "the smell of freshly mown grass and sunshine" that followed Lars into her windowless room when he came for a consultation in 1996.

Lars was born in Sweden and his family moved to Queensland when he was six. His first taste of Tasmania was as a 17-year-old, walking the Overland Track. It was an experience he never forgot — "It made a deep impression on me." Eleven years ago, after daughter Freya was born in Reading, and when Sarah was three months pregnant with Aaron, the couple decided to change tack and moved to the hamlet of Mayberry, 80 kilometres north-east of Cradle Valley in northern Tasmania.

Sarah explains the momentous change as "a maternal urge". The couple longed to provide a safe country upbringing for their children, and to be near family. (Lars's brother and sister-in-law — Peter Cooper and Karen Hall — are the creators of the famous Wychwood garden in nearby Mole Creek, and younger brother Mark also lives nearby.) After finding an old farmhouse via the internet, Lars and Sarah have transformed the blackberry-infested paddocks into a hectare of diverse and mature garden, with a vegetable patch and orchard. There's also a terraced natural amphitheatre with a stage where occasional concerts are held, plus four hectares of pasture for their sheep and goats.

An electric fence, to keep out possums, was the first priority. Then Sarah and Lars planted hundreds of trees. "We didn't start a garden, we started shade and shelter," Lars says.

"Because we're on the road, on an elevated block that rises quite steeply, we were completely on show to all the tourists driving past," Sarah explains. "We were living in this funny little cottage with the mountain in the background, on view to everyone. You'd look out of the kitchen window and see people taking photos of you. Which was fine, it was a compliment; but we needed privacy. Not to mention a windbreak."

The location is challenging to gardeners: 350 metres above sea level and in the shadow of the Tiers, which are often snow-covered in winter. "We sit in a bowl and when the wind's blowing, especially a southerly, the cold air will sit down on top of us," Lars says. "Suddenly, even in the middle of summer, we'll have frozen zucchinis!"

This doesn't deter Sarah, who has enjoyed planting all sorts of fruit and nuts, including raspberries, heritage apples, quinces, peaches, cherries, pears, plums and walnuts. There's an edible front border, stocked with everything >



CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT
A lupin in flower; a view of the
Coopers' house from the front
garden; long-spurred *aquilegia*;
green leaved *Euphorbia robbiae*
and white-flowered *Tiarella*
cordifolia on the left along with
hostas and helebores facing white
centranthus; a rustic gate made
from willow prunings leads to the
vegetable garden, with horseradish
growing in an old tub, and kale and
asparagus behind. FACING PAGE,
FROM TOP Lars and Sarah Cooper,
with 12-year-old Freya, Aaron,
11, Jack Russells Hannah and Banjo,
and Freya's pet goose, Nutmeg;
pink *dianthus* and lupins, purple
Salvia macrophylla, white *aquileia*,
blue *Echinops ritro* and a cut-leaf
elder frame the hilltop view.





from artichokes to hazelnuts, and a mass of blueberries planted in a copse of silver birch. A willow tree arbor has become Aaron's den, there's a woodland walk, and 12 sweet chestnut trees that have been pollarded to form a circle.

Lars's horticulture qualifications from England's Sparsholt College have clearly been put to good use in the garden, although there's not much work for greenkeepers in the district. Instead, he and Sarah have put their former careers on hold and embraced new skills. For Lars, that has included painting and decorating, fencing and gardening. "Anything to bring money home," he says. "You realise how versatile you are, and how capable, when you have to be."

Their latest enterprise makes money right at home. When Lars and Sarah first opened Marakoopa Café, it was just a coffee cart for visitors on their way to the Mole Creek Caves, two kilometres away. But now it has evolved into a proper café that spills out into their front garden.

"We use homegrown or locally sourced produce, and if it's not local at least it's Tasmanian," Sarah says. "That goes for the soft drinks, the craft beers and the wine as well. People come to Tassie for a food and wine experience, so we're committed to providing food that is fresh, local and healthy. I cook like I cook at home — I just make more."

Before they had children and moved to Tasmania, Sarah recalls visiting Lars's family in Mole Creek while on holiday. "I saw this little girl on a trike going down the street on her own — that's normal here — and thought, 'That's how I want to bring up my children.' That, and seeing stars that go all the way to the horizon."

Last year they opened their garden for the first time for Open Gardens Australia. One couple visited and loved it so much they've decided to have their wedding there. Lars hopes it will be the first of many.

The school bus drops Aaron and Freya at the front gate. Sarah is making a fresh batch of rhubarb and elderflower jam using produce from their garden. They serve the last customer and sit together, looking up at "our mountain", planning house parties for the warmer weather that's coming, and hoping the amphitheatre will be packed for the next concert in summer. *

The full garden is open to the public by appointment. Marakoopa Café is at 186 Mayberry Road, Mayberry, Tasmania. (03) 6363 5033; marakoopacafe.com.au



CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE
Beds contain kale, asparagus,
lettuce seedlings, parsley about
to seed, zucchini, peas, beans
and silverbeet; delicate purple
penstemon; the amphitheatre
and stage where concerts are
occasionally held; goats Lily (left)
and Blossom were bottle-raised
by the Cooper children. FACING
PAGE, FROM TOP Some of the
flock of 30 white suffolk-cross
sheep among the limestone
boulders behind the house;
a profusion of lupins, pink
silene and orange *geum*.



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Some may plant a whole menu, and even feed some chickens on the side, others concentrate on fruit, salad greens or herbs. All of them learn from watching the growing process, and get to enjoy the taste of super-fresh food. Every year, we look forward to seeing all of the entries, including images of the wonderful Harvest Table displays.

There are two great prizes to be won:

- 1. \$5000 for the Best Class or School Harvest Table.*
- 2. An iPad Air (16GB with wi-fi) for an individual student's journal on their garden patch (their own or their school's).*

HOW TO ENTER

For Best Class or School Harvest Table, send photographs and a description of how you created the table in 500 words or less, with the school and class name, contact name, address and telephone number. For Best Home Harvest Table Journal, send the journal with the adult's and child's name, address and telephone number. We will be unable to return all journals; photographs become the property of NewsLifeMedia Pty Ltd. Send entries to Country Style, Harvest Table Competition, Locked Bag 5030, Alexandria, NSW 2015. Entries close on December 10, 2015.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OPEN TO AUSTRALIAN RESIDENTS ONLY. COMPETITION STARTS 21/05/15 AT 00.01 AEST AND CLOSING 10/12/15 AT 23.59 AEST. WINNERS JUDGED 14/12/15 AT 14.00 AEST. THIS IS A GAME OF SKILL AND CHANCE PLAYS NO PART IN DETERMINING THE WINNERS. PROMOTER NEWSLIFEMEDIA PTY LTD, LEVEL 1, 2 HOLT STREET, SURRY HILLS, NSW 2010. ABN: 57 088 923 906. FULL TERMS AND CONDITIONS AVAILABLE AT HOMELIFE.COM.AU/TERMS



FROM LEFT 'Kookaburra' apron, \$69, from Utopia Goods. Copper saucepan, \$590, from The Country Trader. Terracotta pots, \$20 each, from The Country Trader. Timber carry tray, \$60, from Doug Up On Bourke. Spode blue Italian saucers, \$39.95 a set of eight, and 'Provence' melamine plates, \$19.95 each, all from The Bay Tree. Ceramic egg holder, \$22, and jars, \$19 and \$38, all from The Country Trader. Cake stand, \$85, and salad bowl, \$84.50, both from The Bay Tree. Stout bottle, \$30, skipping rope, \$20, and baseball, \$10, all from Seasonal Concepts. For stockist details, see page 143.

COUNTRY CHEF LEIGH MARINO

honest work

AFTER EARNING HIS STRIPES IN MELBOURNE AND MILAN, GIPPSLAND CHEF LEIGH MARINO LOVES COOKING FOR HIS HOME CROWD.

RECIPES LEIGH MARINO WORDS TAMSIN CARVAN
PHOTOGRAPHY LISA COHEN STYLING LEE BLAYLOCK





Sweet pumpkin tart with burnt
honey ice-cream (recipe page 79)
Add the rich and malty complexity,
and deft balance of NV Campbells
Rutherglen Topaque (Tokay).
FACING PAGE Leigh Marino, chef
and owner of Big Spoon Little Spoon.
Country Style AUGUST 2015 73



Walk into Big Spoon Little Spoon and you're struck by the sense of place; from images of rolling hills, cows and cypress trees, dark walls and twinkling lights that are reminiscent of a clear night to the district's dairy farmers who count among the many regulars. This is Victoria's West Gippsland in all its beauty and earthiness.

In three years, 29-year-old chef and owner Leigh Marino (himself Gippsland born and bred) has created something that both locals and reviewers have grown to love, after what Leigh freely admits was a nail-bitingly slow start. "Being the first fine-dining restaurant in Warragul, we knew we would have to be the innovators and commit to that," says Leigh, who opened Big Spoon Little Spoon with fellow chef and former business partner Trevor Perkins. "Trev and I agreed that we would rather burn the place to the ground than end up serving parmas or T-bones with mushroom sauce!"

Leigh comes from a large Italian clan — his father is the eldest of 12 — and developed an early passion for cooking. "I was doing long shifts when I was 15 and I absolutely loved it. It was the adrenaline of service, the pressure — those things you don't realise you're addicted to until you're a chef. I still love those things now."

While Trevor Perkins has now stepped away from the business to spend more time with his young family, Leigh continues to build on that early commitment with food that is interesting and inventive, and driven by curiosity and flavour rather than a desire to impress. "It's honest food," he says. "Nothing we do is hard, but we're always pushing ourselves to do more."

Pushing himself is something Leigh knows plenty about. In 2006, aged 19, he left Gippsland to work for Joseph Vargetto at Melbourne's Oyster Little Bourke, then in 2011 realised his dream of working in one of Milan's toughest kitchens — Carlo Cracco's Michelin-starred Ristorante Cracco. But these days, Warragul is home. "I've got no hankering to get back to Melbourne," he says. "I'm happy that the food I love to cook is loved and accepted by Gippsland. I'm proud of what we've done here. I'm nourished."

Big Spoon Little Spoon is at 57 Queen Street, Warragul, Victoria. (03) 5623 6017; bigspoonlittlespoon.com.au

Smoked ham hock, pea & mascarpone risotto The 2014 Deviation Road Pinot Gris delivers the ideal subtle savoury character, and attractive crunchy lemon and pear notes.



FACING PAGE, FROM LEFT Gippsland pastoral scenes adorn the walls at Big Spoon Little Spoon; Leigh is committed to serving innovative food with a regional flavour.

SMOKED HAM HOCK, PEA & MASCARPONE RISOTTO

SERVES 4

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 4 eschalots, peeled, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 1 bay leaf
- 1¼ cups risotto rice, such as arborio, carnaroli or vialone nano*
- ⅓ cup white wine
- 150g butter, chopped
- 1 cup finely grated parmesan
- ½ cup frozen peas
- 1 lemon, halved
- mascarpone, to serve
- wild rocket flowers, to garnish (optional)
- micro cress, to garnish**

HAM STOCK

- 1.2kg smoked ham hock
- 3 carrots, roughly chopped
- 2 brown onions, skin on, roughly chopped
- 2 celery sticks, chopped
- 4 garlic cloves
- 1 bay leaf
- 6 thyme sprigs
- 1 teaspoon peppercorns

To make ham stock, place ham hock, carrot, onion, celery, garlic, bay leaf, thyme, peppercorns and 5 litres of water in a large deep saucepan. Bring to a simmer over a medium heat. (Take care not to boil stock or it will be cloudy.) Simmer gently, regularly skimming any impurities from surface of stock, for 3–4 hours or until meat starts to come away from bone. Set aside for 30 minutes to rest.

Transfer ham hock to a chopping board. Remove skin and meat from

hock. Discard skin and bone. Shred meat and set aside until required.

Strain stock through a fine sieve set over a large bowl. Discard solids. Measure 6 cups of stock and place in a clean saucepan over a low heat to keep warm. (Freeze leftover stock for up to 3 months.)

Heat oil in a large, deep frying pan over a medium heat. Cook eschalot, garlic and bay leaf, stirring, for 3 minutes or until eschalot is soft but not coloured. Add rice and stir until combined. Cook, stirring, for 2 minutes or until heated through and grains appear slightly glassy. Add wine and cook, stirring, for 3 minutes or until absorbed.

Add ½ cup of ham stock and bring to boil. Simmer, stirring gently and occasionally, until stock is absorbed. Repeat process until rice is cooked. (Add less stock towards end of cooking process to avoid overcooking rice.) Remove from heat. Stir in butter, parmesan and peas. Season with salt and a squeeze of lemon juice to taste.


Spoon risotto into bowls. Top with shredded ham and small spoonfuls of mascarpone. Season with freshly ground black pepper. Garnish with rocket flowers and micro cress to serve.

NOTE *If your risotto is gluggy or too thick, add hot stock, gently stirring until desired consistency is achieved.*

**Carnaroli and vialone nano are available at gourmet food stores, delicatessens and some supermarkets.*

***Available at farmers' markets and specialty greengrocers. >*





MARINATED QUAIL WITH SAUTEED MUSHROOMS, BEETROOT & QUINOA

SERVES 4

- 1 tablespoon ground coriander
- 1 tablespoon ground turmeric
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- 1 red onion, peeled, chopped
- 3 lemons, rind finely grated, juiced
- ½ bunch parsley, coarsely chopped
- ½ bunch coriander, coarsely chopped
- 2 long green chillies, deseeded
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled
- 4 butterflied quail*
- 1½ cups caster sugar
- 1½ cups white wine vinegar
- 6 small beetroot, trimmed
- 1 cup black quinoa
- extra 1 lemon, halved
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 40g butter
- 8 small pine mushrooms, brushed**
- 6 sage leaves
- 2 radishes, trimmed, thinly sliced, to garnish

Place ground coriander, turmeric and cumin in a small frying pan. Stir over a medium heat for 5 minutes or until aromatic. Cool. Transfer spice mixture to a food processor. Add onion, lemon rind and lemon juice, parsley, coriander, chillies and garlic, and process until a smooth paste forms. Season with salt and pepper.

Place quail and spice paste in a shallow ceramic baking dish. Turn quail to coat in spice paste. Cover with plastic wrap and place in refrigerator for 8 hours to develop flavours.

Place sugar, vinegar and 1½ cups water in a medium saucepan. Stir over a medium heat until sugar dissolves and mixture boils. Add beetroot and reduce heat to medium-low. Simmer for 45 minutes or until beetroot is tender. Remove from heat. Using

a slotted spoon, transfer beetroot to a plate. Reserve cooking liquid. Wearing rubber gloves to avoid staining your hands, peel beetroot while still warm. Set aside.

Roughly chop 2 beetroot. Place in a food processor with ½ cup of reserved cooking liquid. Process until a smooth puree forms, adding more liquid if necessary. Set aside until required.

Place 2 cups water in a saucepan. Bring to boil over a high heat. Add quinoa and simmer for 8–10 minutes or until quinoa seeds are cracked and liquid is absorbed. Drain in a fine sieve. Rinse under cold running water and drain. Season with salt, pepper and a squeeze of lemon juice.

Preheat oven to 180°C. Heat a chargrill over a medium-high heat. Remove quail from marinade. Season with salt and pepper. Chargrill quail, skin-side down, for 2 minutes. Turn 90 degrees and cook for a further 1 minute or until lightly charred in a crisscross pattern. Turn and cook for 1 minute. Transfer quail to a baking

tray and roast for 6–8 minutes or until cooked through. Cut each quail in half lengthways. Keep warm.

Heat 1 tablespoon of oil and half of butter in a frying pan over a medium heat until butter melts. Cook mushrooms for 10 minutes or until golden. Transfer to a plate lined with paper towel.

Meanwhile, heat remaining oil and remaining butter in a frying pan over a medium heat until butter melts. Cook sage for 2 minutes or until crisp. Transfer to a plate lined with paper towel. Cut remaining whole beetroot in half. Cook, turning occasionally, for 8 minutes or until light golden all over.


Spoon beetroot puree among serving plates. Top with quinoa and quail. Arrange mushrooms and beetroot around quail. Garnish with sage leaves and radish slices.

**Available at selected butchers and some poultry shops. Ask your butcher to butterfly the quail.*

***Available at greengrocers and farmers' markets. Substitute Swiss brown or button mushrooms.*

**Marinated quail with
sautéed mushrooms,
beetroot & quinoa** The
2012 Kooyong Estate Pinot
Noir adds sweet red cherry,
savory beetroot and wild
blackberry notes.





Chocolate brownie with
poached rhubarb & caramel
Perfect with the luscious,
intense NV Turkey Flat Pedro
Ximénez with its rich nut
and raisin characters.

CHOCOLATE BROWNIE WITH POACHED RHUBARB & CARAMEL

SERVES 4

300g dark chocolate, broken into pieces
80g unsalted butter, chopped
1½ cups caster sugar
⅓ cup plain flour
⅓ cup cocoa
1 teaspoon baking powder
4 eggs, whisked
½ cup sour cream
145g milk chocolate, roughly chopped
icing sugar, to dust
micro mint, to garnish*

CARAMEL

2 cups milk
1 cup pure cream
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1½ cups caster sugar
¼ teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
¼ cup cornflour

POACHED RHUBARB

1 cup caster sugar
1 cinnamon stick
1 vanilla bean, split lengthways
1 strip lemon peel, white pith removed
3 rhubarb stalks, cut into 4cm pieces

Preheat oven to 170°C. Grease a 20cm square cake pan and line with baking paper.

Place dark chocolate, butter and caster sugar in a heatproof bowl set over a saucepan half-filled with simmering water (ensure bowl doesn't touch water). Stir with a metal spoon until chocolate and butter melt, and mixture is smooth. Remove from heat.

Gradually stir in flour, cocoa, baking powder, egg and sour cream until well combined. Stir through milk chocolate. Spoon into prepared pan. Bake for 30–40 minutes or until a skewer inserted into centre comes out with a few moist crumbs attached. Cool in pan on a wire rack.

Meanwhile, to make caramel, place milk, cream and vanilla in a saucepan and bring just to boil over a medium heat. Reduce heat and simmer for 2 minutes. Add sugar and bicarbonate of soda, and stir until mixture boils. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 45–55 minutes or until mixture is a rich golden colour and reduced by

one-third. Combine cornflour and ¼ cup water in a jug. Gradually add cornflour mixture to caramel, whisking constantly, until combined and thickened. Transfer to a heatproof bowl. Cover surface of caramel with plastic wrap to prevent a skin forming.

To poach rhubarb, stir sugar, cinnamon, vanilla bean, lemon rind and 2 cups water in a saucepan over a medium heat until sugar dissolves and mixture boils. Poach rhubarb for 5 minutes or until just tender. Drain.

Cut brownie into rectangles and place on plates. Add a spoonful of caramel and a few pieces of rhubarb to each plate. Dust with icing sugar and garnish with micro mint.

**Available at farmers' markets and specialty greengrocers.*

SWEET PUMPKIN TART WITH BURNT HONEY ICE-CREAM

SERVES 6

1 cup caster sugar
1 strip orange peel, white pith removed
4 cloves
6 peppercorns
1 bay leaf
400g butternut pumpkin, skin removed, cut into 3mm-thick slices
1 sheet frozen ready rolled butter puff pastry, partially thawed
20g dark chocolate
pistachio kernels, toasted pepitas (pumpkin kernels), to garnish

BURNT HONEY ICE-CREAM

⅓ cup honey
1¼ cups caster sugar
7 egg yolks
1¾ cups thickened cream
1¼ cups milk

To make burnt honey ice-cream, grease a baking tray. Place honey in a saucepan and bring to a simmer over a medium heat. Simmer for 8 minutes or until honey turns a rich golden brown or reaches 160°C on a kitchen thermometer. Pour onto prepared tray. Set aside for 30 minutes to set.

Stir 1 cup of sugar and ¼ cup water in a saucepan over a low heat until sugar dissolves. Increase heat to medium. Simmer, regularly brushing

down side of pan with a pastry brush dipped in water to prevent sugar crystallising, for 8–10 minutes or until syrup reaches 118°C on a kitchen thermometer and is thick but not coloured. Remove from heat.

Using an electric mixer, beat egg yolks and remaining sugar for 5 minutes or until thick and creamy. With mixer on low speed, gradually add hot sugar syrup in a thin, steady stream and beat until well combined.

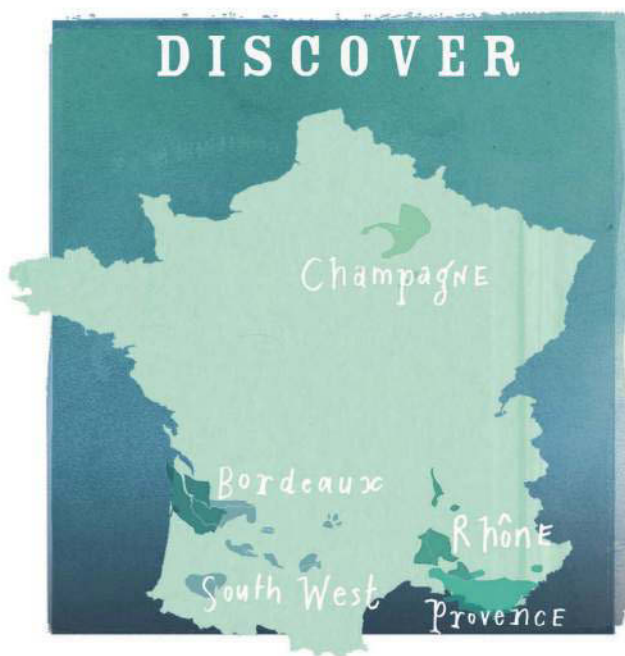
Meanwhile, place cream and milk in a saucepan over a medium heat until small bubbles form around edge of pan.

With mixer on low speed, gradually add hot cream mixture to egg mixture, beating until combined. Pour into an ice-cream machine. Break up burnt honey and add to cream mixture. Churn according to manufacturer's instructions. If you don't have an ice-cream machine, transfer mixture to a shallow metal container. Cover with foil and place in freezer for 4 hours or until firm. Break up ice-cream with a spoon. Transfer to a food processor and process until smooth. Re-freeze. Repeat process twice more or until ice-cream is smooth and creamy.

Preheat oven to 180°C. Grease a 22cm round cake pan. Stir sugar, orange rind, cloves, peppercorns, bay leaf and 2 cups water in a saucepan over a medium heat until sugar dissolves and mixture boils. Add pumpkin and cook for 6–8 minutes or until tender. Transfer pumpkin to a tray lined with paper towel. Simmer cooking liquid for 20 minutes or until reduced by two-thirds. Set aside until required.

Line base of prepared pan with pumpkin slices, overlapping slightly. Place pastry over pumpkin, folding excess pastry over, towards centre of tart. Prick pastry all over with a fork. Bake for 35–40 minutes or until pastry is golden and cooked through. Stand for 10 minutes.

Turn tart onto a serving board or plate. Drizzle with a little cooking liquid and use a kitchen blowtorch to lightly caramelize. Cut into slices and top with ice-cream. Finely grate chocolate over tart and ice-cream. Garnish with pistachios and pepitas. *



french connection

An Albury couple have an online store that's exclusively Gallic.

How we all laughed when that arch-snob Basil Fawlty delivered his classic line, "The people who stay here, wouldn't know Bordeaux from claret." And yet how many of us have had the perseverance to really unlock the mysteries and rewards of French wine?

Factors as superficial as pronunciation and as esoteric as *cru* classification have discouraged all but the most dedicated wine wallies. But the 'Eureka!' moment comes with the realisation that you can benefit from someone else putting in the hard yards.

DiscoverVin is a wine importer headed by Helen and Craig Underhill. It specialises in wines from Bordeaux, Champagne, Rhône, Provence and the south-west of France, and claims to be Australia's premier source of top-value wines from these regions.

"We've selected French wines that we know Australian wine drinkers will love," Craig says. "We focus on those that offer authentic French flavour, and impressive quality and value." The couple, who live in Albury, developed their passion for these wines — and a belief that there were some great drops not reaching our shores — after an extended stay in Bordeaux; they still travel to France regularly.

DiscoverVin stresses that its wines are not available through other suppliers. Many of the wines are served in leading Australian wine bars and restaurants, and in Europe are served in Michelin-starred restaurants.

"We have ignored the hype accompanying many classified Bordeaux wines to seek out exciting, quality wines from this historic region," Craig says. "And we've sought some of the best and most typical wines from areas known predominately to French connoisseurs, such as Jurançon, Madiran and Cahors."

While Australian consumers are generally comfortable selecting wines made from popular grape varieties, French producers rarely put the name of the grape on the label, focusing more on regional characteristics.

Some of DiscoverVin's wines introduce varieties largely unknown to Australians, such as petit manseng, gros manseng, malbec and tannat. But they also showcase the blending of the premium varieties of cabernet sauvignon, cabernet franc and merlot, plus an acclaimed 'growers' champagne, Achille Prancier.

The most valuable gift DiscoverVin is likely to bring to the Australian consumer is the famous Cahors malbec, which the Underhills believe has potential for the greater complexity it shows over popular Argentinian malbecs. The malbec grape's heartland is Cahors, where the 'black wine of malbec' draws on the famous Dordogne soil to display complexity and structure with a full-bodied, tannin backbone that promises longevity. *

For more information, telephone (02) 6020 6016 or visit discovervin.com.au

Top tippie 2006 Chateau Haut-Monplaisir Prestige Malbec (Cahors), \$34.90 (online)

This is a modern expression of the classic Cahors malbec, still assertive in terms of power and depth, but leaner and more complex. It displays dark berry fruit, a whiff of cedar aroma, and a seductive silky texture with a gentle savoury grip. Is this the beginning of a new Black Power movement?



LIKE SUNSHINE, LEMON MAKES EVERYTHING BETTER. SPRINKLE GRATED RIND, WITH CHOPPED PARSLEY, ON TOP OF OSSO BUCO, OR SQUEEZE LEMON JUICE OVER BARBECUED MEATS OR SCALLOPS FOR A HIT OF FRESH FLAVOUR.

FARMERS' MARKET Maldon Market Victoria

This food and craft combo in the Victorian goldfields region, near Castlemaine, celebrates the handmade and the homegrown. On the food side, head straight to Kangaroo Hills Organic Farm from Blampeid for vegetables and Bernie's Fresh Spuds from Trentham, a traditional potato-growing district. You'll also find apples and pears from Harcourt, citrus from Mildura, and Goldfields Farmhouse cheese from Ballarat. There are as many craft stalls as food, so make sure you allow plenty of time for browsing and shopping.

- **WHEN** Every second Sunday, 9am–2pm
- **WHERE** Fountain Street, Maldon, Victoria
- **CONTACT** (03) 5475 2093; maldonnc.org.au

ON THE ROAD

FOR A NATION GIRT BY SEA, IT'S DISAPPOINTING HOW FEW GOOD FISH RESTAURANTS WE HAVE. THE FISH HOUSE IS ONE OF THEM. THERE'S PLENTY TO TEMPT, BUT THE CLASSIC FISH PIE WITH PUFF PASTRY AND MASH IS HARD TO BEAT. 50 GOODWIN TERRACE, BURLEIGH HEADS, QUEENSLAND. (07) 5535 7725; THEFISHHOUSE.COM.AU

GOLDEN GLOW

Towards the end of winter when spring seems far away, the addition of sweet pear to a dish can lift dreary spirits. One simple idea: grill pear halves and serve with goat's curd and toasted walnuts. rediscoverthepear.com.au



flavours

BARBARA SWEENEY EMBRACES WINTER FRUIT, GOOD FISH AND NOODLES.

MEET THE PRODUCERS

**Joanne and Craig Stewart,
Buena Vista, Collie, NSW**



Farmers are ever practical. So when Joanne Stewart and her daughter Abbey had 10 Boer goats in the back paddock, "Craig said I couldn't keep collecting them," Joanne says. "And I said: 'Why not?'". The couple soon found a solution: on learning that only five per cent of goat meat sold in Australia is farmed, they decided that there might be a new business venture in it.

Married in 1989, Joanne and Craig farm at Collie, in north-west NSW. They have two properties: 1040-hectare Inglewood and 410-hectare Beuna Vista, where they currently run a flock of around 600 goats. Craig, who's in Hereford cattle and cropping, didn't find it too difficult to turn his skills to goat breeding and management. "They're quite similar to cattle in their management," he says. "They're a very intelligent animal." *The Gourmet Goat Lady*. (02) 6847.9168; thegourmetgoatlady.com.au



SOUP TIME VISITING SA? LOOK FOR WIECH'S FINE, A FAVOURITE FOR GENERATIONS OF CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP MAKERS IN THE BAROSSA VALLEY. (08) 8563 3004; WIECHS.COM.AU

enduring favourite

A recipe for an old-fashioned pudding binds a family and preserves the memory of a much-loved matriarch.

WORDS SARAH NEIL PHOTOGRAPHY LISA COHEN STYLING TESSA KAVANAGH

This unusual pudding is indeed a family heirloom, having been enjoyed by five generations for at least 100 years. “The recipe was handed down to me by my grandmother Myra Madeline and my mother, Myra Margaret, also cooked it for us during her lifetime,” says reader Frances Endres.

Born in London in 1870, Myra Madeline Clark emigrated to Australia at the age of 24 with her mother and younger sister. The Clarks came to live in the outback Queensland town of Roma, where Myra’s aunt and uncle had a sheep property. She later married James McLean, who became the mayor of Charleville and died in the Spanish flu pandemic of 1919, leaving Myra to bring up their three young daughters.

“Although my grandmother passed away when I was 11, I remember her as a very special person,” Frances says. “She was gentle and softly spoken, and I loved listening to stories of her early life in London.”

Frances’s mother made velvet pudding to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries, and also on Sundays. “We used to have a roast dinner for Sunday lunch and velvet pudding was often served for dessert,” she says.

An egg custard sweetened with golden syrup and topped with meringue, this pudding is probably named for its wonderfully soft texture. “It’s very velvety to eat — it just melts in your mouth — and the golden syrup gives it a flavour all its own,” Frances says. “Both of my daughters and I love to serve it on special occasions, and my granddaughter has now learnt to make it. It has always been a favourite pudding in our family.” *





VELVET PUDDING

SERVES 6-8

2 teaspoons caster sugar
2 egg yolks
3 teaspoons custard powder
475ml milk
3 teaspoons golden syrup
1 teaspoon vanilla essence

MERINGUE

2 eggwhites
2 tablespoons caster sugar

Preheat oven to 220°C. Place sugar and egg yolks in a medium heatproof bowl and whisk until creamy.

Place custard powder in a small bowl. Add 2 tablespoons of milk, and stir until smooth and well combined.

Place remaining milk in a medium saucepan and bring to a simmer over a medium heat. Gradually add hot milk to egg yolk mixture, whisking constantly, until smooth and combined. Add custard-powder mixture and whisk to combine. Return to pan. Place over a medium heat and add golden syrup. Stir constantly with a wooden spoon until mixture boils. Simmer for 3 minutes or until custard thickens. Add vanilla essence, and stir to combine. Strain custard through a fine sieve into a 4-cup capacity baking dish.

To make meringue, using an electric mixer, whisk eggwhites in a clean, dry bowl until soft peaks form. Gradually add sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time, and whisk until sugar dissolves and meringue is thick and glossy.

Spoon meringue over custard in baking dish. Bake for 5-7 minutes or until meringue is golden brown. Serve at room temperature.

SHARE YOUR FAMILY FAVOURITES

Do you have a recipe that has been passed down through generations? Send us your recipe, the story behind it and, if possible, a photograph (preferably a copy or scan) of the relative who passed it on. Remember to include a daytime telephone number. Email Sarah Neil at sarah.neil@news.com.au or send a letter to Heirloom Recipe, Country Style, Locked Bag 5030, Alexandria, NSW 2015. Note: recipes may also be published online at homelife.com.au

MADE for Memories

The best recipes are made for memories – so we created a cookbook filled with Australia's sweetest. We received hundreds of excellent entries – and the recipes featured on these pages are an incredibly tasty snippet of what to expect in the cookbook. Make sure you pick up your copy of 'Made from Memories' in Woolworths supermarkets this October.

Josephine's Angel Cake with Lime Glaze

I have fond memories of making this cake with my mum and grandmother growing up and always being first in line to lick the bowl!

- Josephine G, Templestowe Lower VIC.

PREP TIME: 20 minutes | COOK TIME: 50 minutes | SERVES: 8

INGREDIENTS

Cake

6 large eggs, at room temperature
2½ cups self-raising flour
1½ cups CSR Caster Sugar
Zest of 1 lime
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
¼ teaspoon salt

Lime Glaze

1 tablespoon egg white
¼ cup lime juice
1 ¾ cups CSR Icing Sugar Mixture
Zest of 1 lime to garnish

METHOD

1. Pre-heat oven to 180°C. Grease and line a 20cm round cake tin. Make certain to line the sides.
2. Sift the flour twice into a bowl. Set aside.
3. Separate the eggs and place the whites into a very clean mixing bowl. Beat the whites until peaks form. Slowly add the sugar, a tablespoon at a time whilst still beating. Continue beating until the sugar has dissolved and the whites are stiff.
4. Add the egg yolks one at a time then continue to add the vanilla and zest. Remove the beaters and using a metal spoon, gently fold the flour into the egg mix.
5. Pour mixture into the prepared cake tin and bake for 40-50 minutes or until lightly browned and cake bounces back when lightly pressed. Let the cake cool slightly, then remove from the tin and place on a cooling rack.
6. To make the icing, place all of the ingredients, except the zest, into a small bowl and mix well. When the cake has completely cooled, drizzle on the icing and then garnish with the fresh lime zest.



Elizabeth's Plum Chutney

My dad's plum tree is always heavy with fruit just after Christmas, which is lucky because my family loves this chutney with leftover turkey and ham.

- Elizabeth V, Mount Waverly VIC.

PREP TIME: 20 minutes | COOK TIME: 45 minutes | SERVES: 8

INGREDIENTS

- | | |
|---|---|
| 3 ½ cups purple or red plums, seeds removed | ½ brown onion, chopped |
| 1 cup CSR Brown Sugar | 1 clove garlic, minced |
| 1 cup CSR White Sugar | 2 teaspoons mustard seeds |
| ¾ cup apple cider vinegar | 3 tablespoons crystalized ginger, roughly chopped |
| 1 cup golden seedless raisins | ¾ teaspoon ground cayenne pepper |
| 2 teaspoons salt | |

METHOD

1. Combine sugars and vinegar in a heavy based saucepan. Place on a low heat and stir until the sugars dissolve. Bring the sugar mix to the boil and then stir through the remaining ingredients and again, bring to the boil.
2. Reduce the heat to low and simmer stirring often to stop the mix from catching on the base of the pan.
3. Skim the top of any foam or impurities during the cooking process. Simmer for 45-50 minutes until chutney has thickened.
4. Pour into hot sterilized jars and seal. Allow to rest in a cool dark place for at least one month to allow chutney to season before serving.



Pistachio Tea Cakes with Pomegranate Syrup

My children and I love to cook on the weekends and it means a lot to me to pass on my cooking knowledge. My daughter says the pomegranate seeds look like shiny rubies!

- Loretta Z, Orange NSW.

PREP TIME: 20 minutes | COOK TIME: 35 minutes | MAKES: 4 mini loaves

INGREDIENTS

Cake

- 200g unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1 cup CSR Raw Caster Sugar
- 4 large eggs
- 1 vanilla bean, scraped
- Zest of one large orange
- 220g pistachios, finely ground
- 1 cup plain flour, sifted

Syrup

- ¼ cup CSR Golden Syrup
- 1 teaspoon pomegranate molasses
- 1 tablespoon orange juice
- 60g pistachios, roughly chopped
- 1 small pomegranate, seeds removed

METHOD

1. Pre-heat oven to 150°C. Grease and line four 14cm x 7cm mini loaf tins.
2. In a mixing bowl, beat the butter and the sugar together until pale and fluffy. Add the eggs one at a time making sure each is incorporated before adding the next. Then add the vanilla and zest.
3. Remove the beaters and gently fold in the pistachios and the flour.
4. Divide the batter evenly between the four prepared tins. Place tins on a tray and bake for 30-35 minutes or until a skewer inserted comes out clean.
5. Leave cakes to cool in tins slightly, then turn out and allow to cool completely on a wire rack.
6. Meanwhile, make the syrup by placing the golden syrup, molasses, juice and pistachios in a small bowl and combine well. Once cakes have cooled completely, place on a serving platter and drizzle with the syrup and then top with a sprinkle of pomegranate seeds.



Visit [CSRsugar.com.au](https://www.csr.com.au) for recipes, tips & inspiration and to join the **#BakingNation**



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wonder of wool

THIS VERSATILE FIBRE
INSPIRES AN ARTIST, GIVES
A FAMILY A NEW LIFE AND
ADDS A WARM TOUCH TO
WINTER FASHION.



Kylie and Nick with Zach
outside the mill. FACING
PAGE Nundle Collection
8-ply wool in Donkey.
88 Country Style AUGUST 2015



close knit

A WOOLLEN MILL IN A SMALL AND
FRIENDLY COUNTRY TOWN DREW NICK
AND KYLIE BRADFORD FROM THE CITY.

WORDS MEGAN TROUSDALE PHOTOGRAPHY MARK ROPER

PEOPLE NUNDLE NSW

Nick with a mob of merinos at the DAG Sheep Station. BELOW Thomas T-Bone, the friendly resident steer at Nick and Kylie's property.



It is the end of the school day and Nick and Kylie Bradford walk 100 metres from their business, Nundle Woollen Mill, to Nundle Public School to collect their six-year-old son Zachary, who runs smiling to Kylie for a cuddle.

Just two years ago, such ease and convenience was unfathomable. Nick and Kylie had a Sydney-based knitwear business, International Wool Promotions (Interwool), but had bought the Nundle Woollen Mill in 2007. Frustrated at spending three days a week at Nundle and four days in Sydney, Nick decided something had to change. And it was Nundle, a little town of 300 people in northern NSW, rather than the big city that won out.

While the couple's fashion label, Sheer Bliss, was struggling due to the global financial crisis, business at the mill was thriving, due to a revived interest in knitting, crochet, wool spinning and felting.

In late 2013, they moved to Nundle and in June this year moved into the Federation-style house they have built on a four-hectare property on the edge of the town. At work, the couple run a scaled-back Interwool, including Sheer Bliss and woollen shirt label Infinite Wool. Meanwhile, the mill with its vintage machinery has recorded a 50 per cent increase in turnover, and become a big drawcard for visitors. In 2014 Nundle Woollen Mill won the Heritage and Culture section in the NSW Tourism Awards. "At the end of a tour of the mill, people clap!" Nick says, with some astonishment.

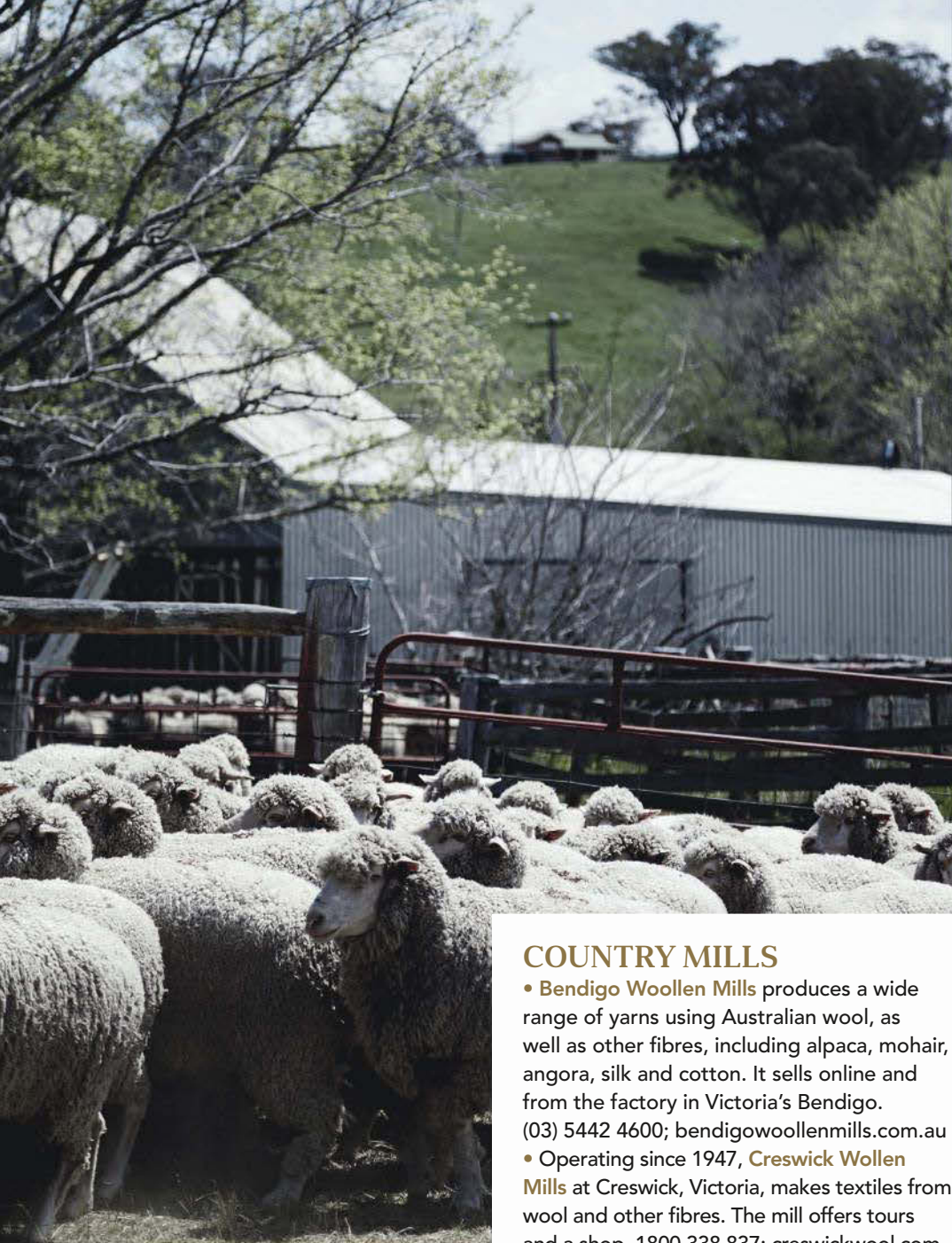
Nick is a walking wool encyclopedia and has been involved in all aspects of the industry, from growing and marketing to manufacturing and retailing, including a role as head of trading for Itochu Wool Limited, then Australia's largest wool exporter, from 1988 to 2002. His family still run sheep at Deniliquin in south-west NSW.

Kylie grew up in Bathurst and on weekends earned pocket money working for her father, Bob Hanrahan, a winner of many shearing competitions. She worked as an accountant in investment banking, then joined her husband at Interwool.

Nick has his eye on the future and the benefits of a country childhood for Zach. "Country kids have admirable humility, are grounded, and have a responsibility to the community that is instilled from a young age," he says. "They have the freedom to go exploring in paddocks, and climbing on tractors or, in the case of Zach this week, dancing around in the rain before coming in for a bath."

Zach's parents have also adapted to the new space. For Kylie, this has meant joining a book group and the ranks of soccer mums and dads, while Nick has become more involved with the Nundle business group and several event committees. With nearly two years of small town living under their belts, their expectations have been exceeded. "It is a very friendly community, and we were accepted and involved immediately," Kylie says. "When we arrived on the first day of school, all the kids said hello to Zach."

"It's the best move we've ever made," Nick concludes. *
Nundle Woollen Mill is at Oakenville Street, Nundle, NSW.
Open 10am–4pm, seven days. (02) 6769 3330; nundle.com



COUNTRY MILLS

• **Bendigo Woollen Mills** produces a wide range of yarns using Australian wool, as well as other fibres, including alpaca, mohair, angora, silk and cotton. It sells online and from the factory in Victoria's Bendigo. (03) 5442 4600; bendigowoollenmills.com.au

• Operating since 1947, **Creswick Woollen Mills** at Creswick, Victoria, makes textiles from wool and other fibres. The mill offers tours and a shop. 1800 338 837; creswickwool.com

• **Wangaratta Woollen Mills** began making high-quality yarns in 1923. Today it is part of Australian Country Spinners (ACS), which includes popular brands Cleckheaton, Panda, Patons and Shepherd. The company's Mill Shop in Victoria's Wangaratta has a website selling discontinued yarns and patterns. The ACS website has a guide to the wool range, plus articles on knitting techniques. 1800 337 032; auspinner.com.au; millshop.com.au

• Established in 1874, **Waverley Woollen Mills**, maker of rugs and scarves, still operates from its original premises in Launceston, which has a retail outlet. It also sells via its website. 1300 787 047; waverley.wwm.com.au



CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT The DAG Sheep Station is just outside Nundle; hanks of freshly dyed yarn; machinery from the 1930s and '50s; the mill produces about 90,000 balls a year; Nick loads the carding line hopper, which was built in 1914.





A carder brush and a doffer stick, two traditional tools, on a bed of indigo-dyed wool. FACING PAGE Grace Wood at the family farm with a batt of carded wool.

state of grace

WHILE RECOVERING FROM CANCER AT
THE FAMILY SHEEP PROPERTY, GRACE
WOOD FOUND A WHOLE NEW CAREER.

WORDS AMBER CRESWELL BELL PHOTOGRAPHY FELIX FOREST





**“I’M INSPIRED BY MY LIFE IN THE
COUNTRY, AND THE FAMILY THAT
HAS SHARED THE JOURNEY.”**



CLOCKWISE, FROM LEFT Grace works the washed and dyed wool through a drum carder; a sheep and alpaca wool polka dot scarf on the kitchen door; three felt cushion covers beneath a 'Blue Ring' wall hanging; some of the 300-strong flock; the 1860s homestead started life as a goldrush-era post office. FACING PAGE A 'Blue Waves' bedcover hung out to dry.

What do you get from a life-threatening illness, followed by convalescence on a sheep property? In Grace Wood's case, the answer is a new career as a felt textile designer.

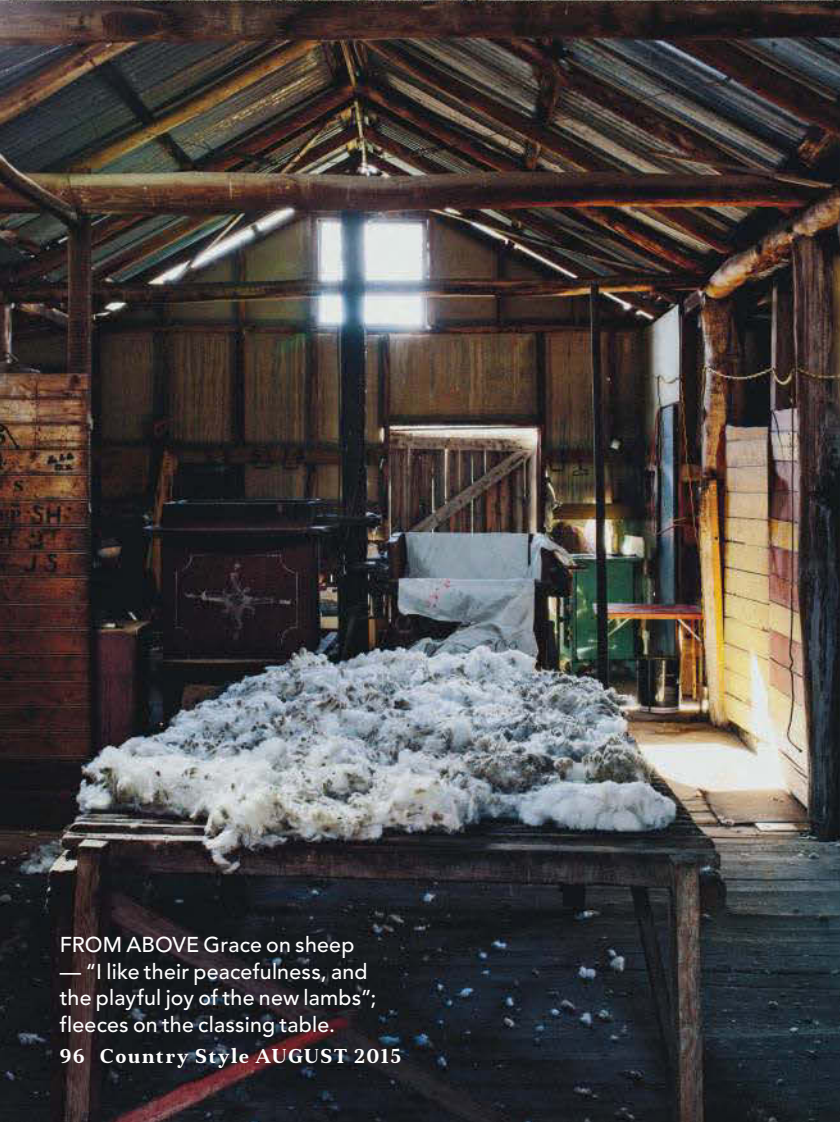
Grace had always wanted to be a farmer, just like her parents. Growing up on an orchard in Barry, south-west of NSW's Bathurst, she loved the country lifestyle and was old enough to appreciate her parents' pioneering ways when, in the 1980s, they moved their apples and pears from chemical dependence to a wholly organic operation.

When her parents, Russell and Catherine, eventually sold the property, Grace felt the loss keenly. Unsure of her direction after finishing school, she eventually moved to London in 2006 for a change of outlook. But the following year she heard that her parents had purchased a new property at Clear Creek, just 20 minutes north of Bathurst — and the news encouraged her to head home in early 2008.

The then 24-year-old began a bachelor of design course at Sydney's College of Fine Arts — still not sure what she wanted to do, but aware that it might be sensible to give her creativity some practical qualification. But then she began suffering terrible pain in her neck and down one side of her body. Worse still, after six months of chiropractic and osteopathic treatment it was discovered that Grace had a large tumour in her neck.

"Facing cancer and mortality was an exhausting experience that carried me to a very dark and fearful place," she recalls. "Many surgeries to remove the tumour eventually gave me the all clear — but the strain on my >





FROM ABOVE Grace on sheep — “I like their peacefulness, and the playful joy of the new lambs”; fleeces on the classing table.
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health had been great and I spent a lot of time at the Clear Creek farm recuperating.”

Dating back to the 1860s, the heritage-listed house was on a large pastoral property that had gradually been reduced. By the time the homestead and remaining land were bought by Grace’s parents, just 60 hectares remained.

And that remainder was in a dire state. Paddocks were filled with discarded white goods, empty car bodies and even old train carriages, and sheds overflowed with junk. After this debris had all been consigned to big skips, Russell and Catherine began building dams, controlling erosion, slashing weeds, and planting trees, vegetables, flowers and clover pasture for a flock of 300 merino and crossbred sheep. The house, too, had suffered neglect and required a considerable labour of love to be revived.

It was here that Grace convalesced, as the seasons came and went. And it was at the farm that Sheralie Wood — Grace’s aunt and an accomplished textile artist — began teaching Grace to make felt.

“It took me out of my head and into my hands,” Grace says. “And, of course, the fact that the raw material was right here on the farm seemed very right as well.”

When Grace’s health improved, she returned to study in 2010. Towards the end of the course, she was required to complete an internship as part of her degree — and now she had a clear direction. Having fallen in love with the work of Dutch fibre artist Claudy Jongstra, Grace applied to join her studio in the Netherlands — and was accepted. “This was a major turning point,” Grace says. “When I returned home in 2013, I started my own studio practice hoping to emulate the business model I had observed.”

Now 31, Grace sells her hand-felted textiles through her website, as well as on Etsy. Although she is now based in the Blue Mountains, the influence of Clear Creek is clear in her work, starting with the raw wool that’s treated with traditional craft techniques, including dyes made from plants from around the farm.

“I’m inspired by my life in the country, and the family that has shared the journey,” Grace says. “I get back to the farm as often as I can, and I love to be here for significant events like shearing and crutching. And at Christmas and on birthdays we all congregate, often bringing large groups of friends with us.”

This recent visit is in winter, which at Clear Creek means frosts and even the occasional snowfall — so beanies and gloves are fashion essentials. Everyone gathers around the kitchen’s open fireplace, drinking endless cups of tea and cooking stews on the slow-combustion stove. And over the warm and welcome smell of the fire lingers a faint scent of lanolin that speaks of sheep, wool and craft. *

To see more of Grace’s work, visit gracewooddesigns.com

We love winter

As the temperature drops, stay indoors cosy and warm. Green's have a range of home-style puddings which are quick and easy to prepare, and are sure to warm up a cold winter's night.

Green's®

We love baking.



top of the class

AS WOOL CLASSERS AND EVEN CONTRACTORS,
WOMEN ARE MOVING UP THE RANKS IN THE
SHEARING SHED THAT WAS ONCE A MALE BASTION.

WORDS VIRGINIA IMHOFF PHOTOGRAPHY MARK ROPER



Emma Morvell with one of her shearing teams — husband and business partner Brett is far right in the back row.



EMMA MORVELL

HOW A MOTHER OF FOUR BECAME
BOSS OF THE SINGLET BRIGADE.

When you've grown up around shearing sheds, loving the buzz of the shears, the camaraderie and the feel and smell of a newly shorn fleece, your destiny may already be mapped.

That was the case for Emma Morvell whose father, Dominic Briody, was a shearing contractor in central Victoria. "I followed Dad around in the sheds and was his little helper," says 32-year-old Emma, now a wool classer and a shearing contractor herself. "And I've been full-time in the sheds since I was 15 and have never done anything else." These days Emma and her husband Brett run Central Shearing, providing shearing teams and wool-classing services in central Victoria.

Emma grew up at Lexton, north-west of Ballarat and left school at 14 to help her father. Then at 15, she took off for Western Australia, working in sheds between Kalgoorlie and Esperance. "I was travelling around as a rouseabout for three years and then came back to Ballarat and did wool classing at the old School of Mines," she says. "I thought I was pretty clever and was very confident as a wool handler. I really loved the industry — the hard work and the people."

She ran her father's contracting team for a year and by the time she was 21 she had met Brett Morvell — "He was shearing for me in my dad's business" — and was ready to go out on her own. For the first five years she and Brett worked together in the sheds. "We were together 24/7 and had two children in that time, but now we split our work so we can represent ourselves better to the farmers," she says.

Emma is adept at changing hats. She juggles the demands of four children — Patrick, eight, Hannah, six, Abigail, four, and two-year-old Michelle — while expecting their fifth child in September. That's together with managing a business that runs four shearing teams, with around 20 full-time employees and up to twice as many casuals.

And if that was not enough, last year Emma also set up a home birth business in Ballarat. "I'm addicted to babies," she says. "And it's an outlet for my feminine side."

More women are working in sheds these days and, according to Emma, many set their sights on wool classing.

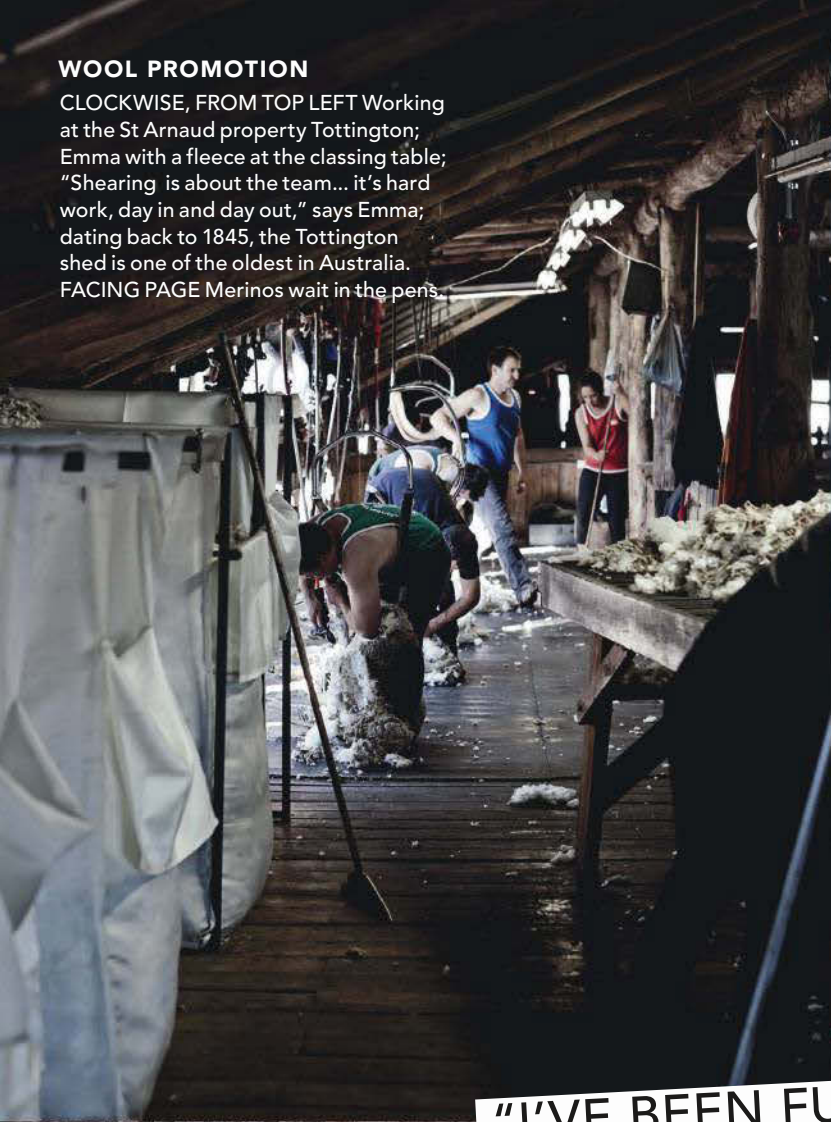
"They seem to make better wool handlers than men, and perfect their skill and go on to wool classing, whereas lots of the young fellas who are in it for the long-term want to get on to the handpiece."

Historically, there has sometimes been a degree of enmity between shearers and farmers. Asked if it still exists in the sheds, Emma says they have worked hard with both groups to break down any barriers. "Plus we put on a ball each year, and invite all the farmers and staff. In the sheds, the shearers are in singlets and the farmers in their work clothes. But at the ball, they all sit together wearing suits!"

For more information, telephone 0400 602 481 or visit facebook.com/CentralShearingWaubra

WOOL PROMOTION

CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT Working at the St Arnaud property Tottington; Emma with a fleece at the classing table; "Shearing is about the team... it's hard work, day in and day out," says Emma; dating back to 1845, the Tottington shed is one of the oldest in Australia. FACING PAGE Merinos wait in the pens.



"I'VE BEEN FULL-TIME IN THE SHEDS SINCE I WAS 15 AND HAVE NEVER DONE ANYTHING ELSE."





TRACY HALPIN

BEING BORN WITH A HEARING
IMPAIRMENT HASN'T STOPPED THIS
HARDWORKING WOOL CLASSER.

Shearing is familiar territory to Tracy Halpin. The 25-year-old grew up on a 420-hectare sheep property just outside Seymour in central Victoria. “My dad was a shed hand and I was in the sheds as soon as I was walking,” says Tracy, who now works as a wool classer. “Now I pretty much help Dad all the time when I’m not away wool classing or rouseabouting — farming is something that my life balances on.”

By the time she was 15, Tracy was working on pastoral properties. “I did a farmhand placement at school and I’d work in all the holidays,” she says. She went on to study for a diploma of agriculture at Dookie Agricultural College near Shepparton, gaining a certificate in wool classing.

“Wool classing is something that I really wanted to do, and I loved it. As soon as I finished at Dookie, a contractor asked me to join his team, rousing and as a classer. I headed up north to Cobar, Ivanhoe and Coolabah in NSW for six months, staying in quarters near the sheds or camping out.”

In 2013, Tracy went to North America on an agricultural exchange program, spending eight months as a farmhand on a Saskatchewan cattle property, and five months with dairy cattle and working in sheds in California. >



"FARMING IS SOMETHING THAT
MY LIFE BALANCES ON."



Tracy at Greenslopes,
a neighbouring sheep
property near
Victoria's Seymour.



FOR TRACY, THE BEST TIMES ARE
WHEN SHE'S IN THE SHEDS,
WORKING AS PART OF A TEAM.



CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT
Fleeces sorted into bins;
Tracy marks a bale with a stencil;
wool trimmings drift towards
a shearer's companion;
Tracy throws a fleece on the
classing table. FACING PAGE
Tracy and Wilma head for the shed.

“Travelling really opens your eyes and you learn a lot about yourself,” she says succinctly.

Returning home, she spent some time working in sheds around Euroa and Geelong, and began helping her parents run the farm between the “ebb and flow” of the shearing season. On the day we visit, Tracy is waiting for the call to head back up to the sheds in NSW. She comes across the yard with Wilma, her border collie-kelpie cross. Wilma is due to have pups any day and Tracy loves training the young working dogs almost as much as she loves sheep.

For Tracy the best times are when she’s in the sheds, working as part of a team. “Everyone is happy and wanting to get the job done. I’m behind the table, putting the wool in the right bale. I normally work quickly, looking at

a fleece for micron diameter, length, the feel, the sound...”

The last is remarkable because Tracy is hearing impaired and had a cochlear implant in 2011. “Many classers listen to the sound of the wool by flicking it between their fingers — I had to learn to get the same information by feel.”

As Tracy speaks, a flock of cockatoos screeches overhead, unwelcome visitors who recently destroyed a newly sown crop. “They were the first things I heard after my implant. I was in the kitchen and said to Mum, ‘What’s that new sound up there?’ Mum said it was the clock, but it wasn’t — it was the bloody cockies!”

Nothing quite matches the din of a shearing shed. But, Tracy now has a distinct advantage. “I can cut down the background sound and just listen to the music...” *

WOOL ON SHOW

- The Australian Sheep & Wool Show, in Bendigo, Victoria, celebrates fibre, fashion and food. Includes the Women of Wool lunch, with speakers including designer Jenny Kee. July 17–19. (03) 5443 9902; sheepshow.com, womenofwool.com.au
 - Hamilton in Victoria hosts Sheepvention, with ram sales, farm dog competitions, seminars and wool fashion parades. August 2–4. (03) 5572 2563; hamiltonshowgrounds.com.au
 - See shearing competitions, dog trials and historical demonstrations at the Jackie Howe Festival in Queensland’s Jondaryan. September 4–6. (07) 4692 2229; jondaryanwoolshed.com.au
- For more information on Australia’s wool industry, merino wool fashion and more, visit www.wool.com



FROM LEFT Table, \$485, from Doug Up On Bourke. Still-life painting, \$1750, from The Country Trader. Hand-restored army blanket, \$155, from Perpetual One. Jug, \$44.50, from Heaven In Earth. Recycled wool scarf, \$75, from Planet. Large vintage bobbin, \$120, from Quintessential Duckeggblue. Small wooden reel, \$65, from Elements I Love. Baby booties, similar from Uimi. Jar of vintage knitting needles, POA, from Seasonal Concepts. All other items, stylist's own. FACING PAGE, FROM LEFT Stool, \$550, from Ici et Là. Single-origin cormo wool 10-ply yarn, \$69 for 300g, from Ton of Wool. Hand-dyed Woolganic 8-ply yarn in Pillar Box, \$24 for 100g, from Australian Organic Wool. Nikki Gabriel timber knitting needles, \$40, from Koskela. Nundle Collection 20-ply yarn in Berry and Natural, \$19.50 for 200g, both from Nundle Woollen Mill. Bunting made from 'Source' worsted EthEco wool upholstery fabric in Cee, POA, from Instyle. Contract Textiles. Ladder, \$245, from Mitchell Road Antique & Design Centre. Blue coal scuttle, \$575, from The Country Trader. Artichoke basket, \$985, from Elements I Love. 'Extreme' hand-knitted oversized double woollen blanket in Natural Silver, \$1595, from Little Dandelion. For stockist details, see page 143.



Flock stars

WE INVITED THE SOURCE – TWO
MERINO EWES AND THEIR TWIN LAMBS
– ON OUR WOOL DECORATING SHOOT.

PHOTOGRAPHY FELIX FOREST STYLING PHOEBE McEVOY







CLOCKWISE, FROM LEFT Country Style 'Harvest' basket, \$153.95 a set of two. Nundle Collection 20-ply yarn in Berry, \$19.50 for 200g, from Nundle Woollen Mill. Big Loop yarn in Light Heather Grey, \$220 for 1.1kg, from Seasonal Concepts. Table, \$320, from Joe Vinks. Stencils, \$20 each, from The Bay Tree. Spotted scarf, \$220, from Planet. Mud Studio 'Stitched' bowl, \$50, from African Trading Port. Hand-dyed 30-ply roving, \$50 a pack of 8 colours, from Natalie Miller Design. Hand-dyed Woolganic 8-ply yarn (on spool) in Pillar Box, \$24 for 100g, from Australian Organic Wool. Timber spool, \$10, from The Lost And Found Department. Scissors, \$30, from The Society Inc. Heart wrapped in Nundle Collection 20-ply yarn in Natural, \$19.50 for 200g, from Nundle Woollen Mill. **FACING PAGE, FROM LEFT** Country Style 'Harvest' basket, as before. Big Loop yarn in Ivory, \$205 for 1.1kg, and Light Heather Grey, \$220 for 1.1kg, both from Seasonal Concepts. Hand-dyed Woolganic 8-ply yarn in Pillar Box, as before. Nundle Collection 20-ply yarn in Berry, as before. Table, as before. Tea-cosy, POA, from Pop Craft. Teapot, stylist's own. Vintage book, POA, from Hamptons House. Gien 'Cherry' teacup and saucer, \$52.50, from The Bay Tree. Bench, \$1050, from Joe Vinks. 'Fishbone' queen-size blanket, \$570, from Luna Gallery. 'Lulu' cushion, \$109, from Uimi. 'Cloud' cushion, \$240, from Jordan. For stockist details, see page 143.

FROM LEFT Sika Design 'Rossini' chairs in Taupe, \$350 each, from Domo. Ren Home 'Posey' cushion, \$69.95, from HardToFind. 'Woodslady' merino throw, \$329, from Pony Rider. Table, \$900, from Ici et Là. Vintage wooden wool reels, \$65 each, from Elements I Love. Nkuku mug, \$25, from Honeybee Homewares. Wedgwood floral plate, \$39.95, Bristol pink dessert plate, \$10, and Gien 'Cherry' saucer, \$52.50 including teacup, all from The Bay Tree. Market basket, \$60, from 2 Duck Trading Company. For stockist details, see page 143. Photographed at Glenmore House, Glenmore, NSW. glenmorehouse.com.au



a superfine year

In just one year, the boutique hand knitting yarn **Australian Superfine Merino by Cleckheaton** has already made a big impact.



AUSTRALIAN
SUPERFINE
MERINO

by Cleckheaton

MEET THE GROWERS

One year on from the launch of Australian Superfine Merino by Cleckheaton, Noel and Lyndsay Henderson, who run 15,000 sheep at Avington Stud in Victoria's central highlands, say the company has created opportunities for superfine wool growers.

"Opening up new markets is vital for the future of the merino industry and this has created optimism and great enthusiasm," says Noel. "Superfine merino wool is the result of hundreds of years of genetic development in the sheep industry and is a unique product. The fibre diameter and crimp add to the soft feel and set it aside from other wools. All sheep at Avington Stud are performance-tested and selected for quality fleece, whiteness and high crimp, elasticity and strength."

The makers of Australian Superfine Merino by Cleckheaton have partnered with the Australian Superfine Wool Grower's Association to ensure that only the finest fleece is sourced from Australian growers for the production of this yarn.

"Growers are very proud of what they do and the quality wool they produce," Noel says. "Knowing that there is a resurgence in people using this beautiful wool, and understanding that growers work with their hands to produce quality products, is very satisfying and rewarding."

Sarah Hodgson, daughter of John and Vera Taylor at the family property, Winton, in Tasmania.





THE YARN

Built in 1923 to create employment opportunities in regional Victoria after World War I and World War II, the Wangaratta Woollen Mills is now the proud maker of Australian Superfine Merino by Cleckheaton. The team at Wangaratta transforms the Australian superfine merino wool, traditionally reserved for high-quality men's suits, into Australian Superfine Merino by Cleckheaton 8-ply, one of the world's finest hand-knitting yarns.

The fine crimp of the Australian superfine merino wool makes for a resilient garment, and the bright white fleece absorbs colour with a rich depth. Offering superior next-to-skin softness, this yarn is the ultimate in affordable luxury.

Australian Superfine Merino by Cleckheaton offers 30 shades. Each was carefully selected to ensure the colours could be used together or on their own. This shade range promises to see constant evolution from the mill's custom dye house and the fashion design team.

THE NEW COLLECTION

To showcase this luxurious yarn, the design team based in Melbourne publishes a range of beautiful knitting and crochet patterns for women, men and children. Recently, the team has launched a new pattern range titled the Flinders Collection, inspired by a long weekend away on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula. Using a winter beach palette of mid-navy, smoke, stone, white, cream and denim shades, this collection is relaxed, modern and fashionable. Stitch techniques include textured ribs, moss cable combinations, brioche stitch and crochet over a wide range of skill levels. Visit the website to view your nearest stockist and this new collection.

AUSTRALIAN
SUPERFINE
MERINO
by Cleckheaton

For more information, visit cleckheatonsuperfine.com.au



a fine yarn

ENJOY WINTER DAYS IN STYLISH PIECES THAT EMBRACE
THE VERSATILITY OF AUSTRALIAN WOOL – INCLUDING
TWO *COUNTRY STYLE* PATTERNS FOR YOU TO KNIT.

PHOTOGRAPHY **CORRIE BOND** STYLING **LARA HUTTON**

WARM REGARDS

EASY PIECES FOR A RELAXED WEEKEND.

Handmade bobbly hat, see page 122 for
knitting pattern. Strateas Carlucci wrap
jacket, \$990, and slub knit, \$495.

For stockist details, see page 143.

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WE BECAME THE LAND THAT RODE ON THE SHEEP'S BACK AFTER THE FIRST MERINO LANDED IN 1797.

BOLD INTENTIONS

SIGNAL WHERE YOU STAND WITH STRIKING SILHOUETTES AND BESPOKE PIECES.

LEFT Bassike wool overcoat, \$1395, turtleneck knit, \$420, and pants, \$240. Merchant 1948 'Whizz' shoes, \$169.90.

RIGHT Strateas Carlucci robe coat, \$2500. San Francisco Hat Company fedora, \$159. Sambag 'Angela' boots, \$340.

FACING PAGE Little Dandelion chunky jumper, POA. Bassike sweater, \$450. Nicholas skirt, \$299. Purl Harbour socks, \$44.

For stockist details, see page 143.







RAW MATERIAL

PICK TRUE-TO-NATURE PIECES.

Jac + Jack 'Delphi' sweater, \$799. David Lawrence 'Campbell' shirt, \$129. Morrison 'Nyssa' pants, \$299. Little Dandelion scarf, POA. Sambag 'Angela' boots, \$340. FACING PAGE Purl Harbour vest, \$363, and sleeveless cardigan, \$330. Saba 'Tanya' vest, \$199. Jigsaw crepe suit dress, \$289. Rice bucket, \$140, from The Bronte Tram. For stockist details, see page 143.

STITCH IN TIME CRAFTING MAKES MEMORIES.

Fisherman's rib vest, instructions below. BC by Bless'ed Are The Meek dress, \$149. Purl Harbour socks, \$44. Stool, \$140, from The Bronte Tram. For stockist details, see page 143.

Hair and make-up by Lei-Tai.
Styling assistance by Lily Owen.

knit with style

KEEP WARM THIS WINTER IN THESE *COUNTRY STYLE* KNITS. MELODY LORD SHOWS YOU HOW TO MAKE A FISHERMAN'S VEST AND A HAT.

FISHERMAN'S RIB VEST

This vest features cables at the front and sides. Fits small (medium, large). Tension: 16 stitches and 32 rows over 10cm. Finished length is about 58 (60, 62) centimetres, but the fisherman's rib is heavy and stretchable. If you want to add more length, work more rows in step 1 before joining the front and back.

MATERIALS

12-ply wool yarn, such as Patons 'Jet'
12-ply 10 (10, 11) balls
5.5mm circular knitting needle, 80cm long
large cable needle
5.5mm circular knitting needle,
30cm long (optional)
large wool needle and scissors

1 Cast on 68 (76, 86) stitches for the back. Purl all stitches in the first row (wrong side row). Begin fisherman's rib: slip 1 at the edge, *K1 stitch in the row below, P1*, repeat * to * to the last stitch, K1. Repeat this row, until the work measures 16cm (40 rows). In the final wrong side row, increase one stitch at each end: 70 (78, 88) stitches.

2 At the same time, cast on 70 (78, 88) stitches for the front and work the fisherman's rib to match the back: 72 (80, 90) stitches.

3 Beginning with the left edge of the front and continuing in fisherman's rib, work 32 (36, 41) stitches, place 4 stitches on a cable needle at the back of the work, work 4 stitches in fisherman's rib,

knit up the stitches from the cable needle then continue the fisherman's rib to the last 4 stitches.

4 Continuing in fisherman's rib, work the first 4 stitches from the right edge of the back, then work the remaining 4 stitches from the front. Continue in fisherman's rib across the back until 4 stitches remain, then work the first 4 stitches from the left edge of the front, then the remaining 4 stitches of the back, then continue working fisherman's rib in the round. This step creates the first side cable twists.

5 When you are working fisherman's rib in the round, work alternate rows as *K1, P1 in the row below*. You may find it helpful to place a stitch marker at the beginning of the round to indicate where to change.

6 Work 16 rows in fisherman's rib, then repeat the cable twists. Work in the round until you have completed 4 cables.

7 On the final round, cast off 8 stitches across the top of the side cables and continue with the front and back as separate pieces. For the front (64, 72, 82 stitches), work in fisherman's rib and continue the cables for the centre front until you have completed three more cables, ending with a wrong side row after the twist at the top of the third cable.

8 For the front neck, work 20 (24, 29) stitches and turn. Working on these stitches only, knit or purl 2 tog at the neck edge of the next and alternate rows 4 (5, 6) times, until 16 (19, 23)

stitches are left on the needle. Work 10 more rows in fisherman's rib then shape the shoulder by casting off 8 (9, 11) stitches at the beginning of the next row, work one row, then cast off the remaining stitches. Place 24 stitches on a stitch holder and work the other side of the neck and shoulder to match.

9 For the back (62, 70, 80 stitches), work 66 (68, 70) rows in fisherman's rib, then cast off at the beginning of the next 4 rows, as for the front shoulders, leaving 22 stitches on the needle for the back neck.

10 Use a large wool needle to sew up the shoulder seams. Use a magic loop or change to the shorter set of circular needles for the neck. Beginning with the back neck stitches that are still on the needle, work in fisherman's rib across the back neck, knit up 10 (12, 14) stitches along the neck side edge, continue in fisherman's rib across the 24 stitches from the stitch holder, and knit up 10 (12, 14) stitches along the other side edge. Continue working fisherman's rib in the round for the neck (remembering to alternate knitting and purling into the row below), until you have completed a further two cables in the centre front.

11 After the top twist of the final cable, work one wrong side row then cast off loosely in fisherman's rib.

12 Use a large wool needle to sew in the tails of yarn.



BOBBLY HAT

MATERIALS

2 balls super-chunky (20-ply) wool yarn,
such as Morris 'Fuel'

10mm circular knitting needle, 80cm long
large wool needle

NOTE To knit this hat in the round, you need to use the magic loop method of knitting with a circular needle. You can learn how to do this online. If you're not confident, or prefer straight needles, simply knit each round as a row and remember to reverse the stitches when you are knitting the wrong-side rows. Sew up the seam using mattress stitch when you are finished.

SPECIAL STITCHES

MOSS STITCH K1, P1 alternately.

In subsequent rounds, knit into purl stitches and purl into knit stitches in the row below.

SSP Slip-slip-purl. Bring the yarn to the front of the work ready to purl, slip the next two stitches knitwise from the left-hand needle to the right-hand needle, then slip them back onto the left-hand needle and purl the two stitches together.

INSTRUCTIONS

1 Cast on 48 stitches. If you like, use a stitch marker or a loop of coloured yarn to mark beginning of each round. Working in the round with a magic

loop, work 8 rounds of K2, P2 ribbing.

2 Increase 1 stitch in the first stitch of the next round, then knit all stitches for one round (49 stitches).

3 Work in moss stitch (K1, P1 alternately). Continue for 15 more rounds until work measures about 17cm from the beginning.

4 As you begin decreasing, be careful to keep to the moss stitch pattern. Next round: work 4 stitches in pattern, *SSP, K2tog, work 8 stitches in pattern*, repeat * to * twice more, SSP, K2tog, work 5 stitches in pattern to end of round (41 stitches). Work one round in alternating K1, P1 pattern (moss stitch).

5 Next round: work 4 stitches in pattern, *SSP, K2tog, work 6 stitches in pattern*, repeat * to * twice more, SSP, K2tog, work 3 stitches in pattern to end of round (33 stitches).

Work one round in alternating K1, P1 pattern (moss stitch).

6 Next round: work 4 stitches in pattern, *SSP, K2tog, work 4 stitches in pattern*, repeat * to * twice more, SSP, K2tog, work 1 stitch in pattern to end of round (25 stitches). Work one round in alternating K1, P1 pattern (moss stitch).

7 Next round: *K2tog, P1, K1*, repeat * to * to last stitch, P1 (19 stitches). Knit all stitches in the next round.

8 Next round: *K2tog, K1*, repeat * to * to last stitch, K1 (13 stitches). Next round: K2tog, repeat to last stitch, K1 (7 stitches).

9 Break off the yarn, leaving a long tail, and use a large wool needle to pass the tail of yarn through the remaining stitches, drawing the top of the hat up tight. Fasten the tail of

yarn but don't cut it off: you can use it to attach the pompom.

10 Use the leftover yarn to make a big, fluffy pompom. Cut off a length of yarn about 50cm long, fold it in half and set it aside. Holding the four fingers of one hand flat, loosely wrap the rest of the yarn around your fingers. When you're done, slide loops off your fingers, pass the doubled piece of yarn through the centre and knot it tightly to hold the loops. Cut loops opposite the knotted yarn and fluff them out with your fingers to make a pompom. Trim any extra long bits so you have a nice rounded shape, and use the tail of yarn at the top of the hat to attach the pompom by stitching through the knotted yarn. Darn in the tail of yarn, and the tail from the beginning of the work as well. *



A man and a woman are standing in a forest. The woman is wearing a bright blue, knee-length coat with a high collar and two buttons. The man is wearing a dark blue cable-knit sweater, a grey and white striped scarf, and blue jeans. They are both looking towards the camera. The background consists of tree trunks and foliage.

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inside knowledge

JULIETTE WINTER TALKS WITH CARLA OATES, THE BEAUTY CHEF, ABOUT FERMENTED FOODS AND HOW DIGESTION AFFECTS THE SKIN.

Carla Oates's interest in the power of plants began as a hobby and became a successful career. Based in Bondi and the founder of the skincare and inner beauty brand, The Beauty Chef, Carla spends as much time connecting with nature as her busy schedule allows. "I love Sydney but I also appreciate how easy it is to leave the hustle and bustle with so many great places so close," she says. "I like bushwalking — the south coast is a favourite, as my family has a holiday house in Kiama. It's so beautiful there, the best of both worlds — you have both the beach and the country."

Carla's curiosity about plant-based ingredients blossomed while working as a beauty editor on *body+soul*, a weekly supplement in News Corp newspapers, 15 years ago. After researching the benefits of looking after your skin with active plant compounds, Carla began experimenting with her own beauty recipes using organic food from the kitchen and fresh herbs from her garden.

"I firmly believe that natural skincare is super active," she says. "Plants are rich in antioxidants that protect them from the environment and when we consume or apply these plants, they transfer many of the same benefits. Plants are rich in vitamins, minerals, essential fatty acids, alpha hydroxyl acids, and enzymes; they are cleansing, anti-inflammatory, anti-bacterial and regenerative. We have a synergy with plant life that can't be replicated by synthetic chemicals."

Demand for her homemade skincare balm and inner beauty powders — both rich in fermented ingredients — flourished alongside The Beauty Chef's core philosophy: digestive health as the key to radiant skin.

"Our gut is where 70 per cent of the immune system lies," she says. "It's where we metabolise hormones, make detoxifying enzymes and make nutrients, and so much of what goes on in our digestive system can impact on our skin."

Ideally, it's best to consume a range of fermented foods, as each has different strains of good bacteria. Sauerkraut, kefir (a fermented milk drink) and kombucha (fermented tea) for example, all have their own particular organisms.

Although the skin is the body's largest organ, it's also the last to receive vital feeding — if you're nutrient-deficient or have a sluggish digestive system that's not absorbing them effectively, your skin is the first to miss out, leaving it looking lacklustre. "There is more and more scientific research showing the ways in which digestive health and probiotics play a huge role in skin health," Carla says.

Whether she's bushwalking or strolling by the sea, Carla's inspiration for better health and beautiful skin stems from the natural wonders around her. "We don't need to make super-duper synthetic ingredients in a lab," she says. "Fermentation turns natural ingredients into super natural ingredients — active, balanced and rejuvenating." *



CULTURE CLUB

Superchargers from The Beauty Chef.

- Add a dash of **Hydration Inner Beauty Boost** (500ml, \$39.95) to a glass of water for a delicious coconut, lemon myrtle, aloe vera and probiotic cocktail to give your skin a gorgeous glow.
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**“DIGESTIVE
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PROBIOTICS PLAY
A HUGE ROLE IN
SKIN HEALTH.”**



Sydney's Carla Oates.
FACING PAGE Menu
'Norm' bottle, \$49,
and stool, \$199, both
from Urban Couture.
For stockist details,
see page 143.

THOUSAND-YEAR WALK

HEAD TO KAKADU FOR BREATHTAKING VIEWS, MAGNIFICENT
SWIMMING HOLES AND THE OLDEST ART GALLERIES ON EARTH.

WORDS VIRGINIA IMHOFF PHOTOGRAPHY MICHAEL WEE

The view of southern
Kakadu from the top
of Gunlom Falls.





Kakadu's night-life is wild. But it's not thumping music that wakes you, just howling dingoes outside camp. And the other things that go bump in the night. At a beautiful campsite called Gunlom in southern Kakadu, it's a mob of brumbies that come thudding around our tents in the dead of night. By day, they keep a wary distance across the creek but after dark drift into the campground to graze on patches of grass.

At times you feel like you're on safari, Top End style, when you're camping in the World Heritage-listed Kakadu National Park, 240 kilometres east of Darwin. We've joined a small group on a Kakadu Walking Adventure run by World Expeditions. On this six-day, five-night trip, we're often on foot while exploring one of the most spectacular and dynamic natural environments in Australia. Kakadu covers 20,000 square kilometres of South Alligator River floodplain, woodland, sandstone country and escarpment.

Walking is undoubtedly the best way to immerse yourself in this incredibly diverse landscape and to

appreciate the heritage of Indigenous occupation. Kakadu's extensive rock art galleries are some of the longest records of any people in the world.

After an early pick-up from our Darwin accommodation, we travel east along the Arnhem Highway, stopping at the Pudukul Aboriginal Cultural Centre at Humpty Doo. Wulna/Limilngan elder Graham Kenyon gives us a traditional welcome to country, and introduces some appropriate culture and customs. His daughter Selena demonstrates dilly bag and basket weaving, sitting cross-legged as she rolls strands of sand palm and pandanus leaf. After damper and billy tea, we continue on to Kakadu.

By late afternoon we're cruising on Yellow Waters, a vast wetland fed by the South Alligator system, and the lifeblood for the surrounding floodplains and savannah woodland. It's an important habitat for birds — and as we glide across the mirrored surface, past carpets of waterlily and lotus, we spot Australia's only stork, the jabiru, wading on long, red legs, not to mention white-bellied sea eagles, >

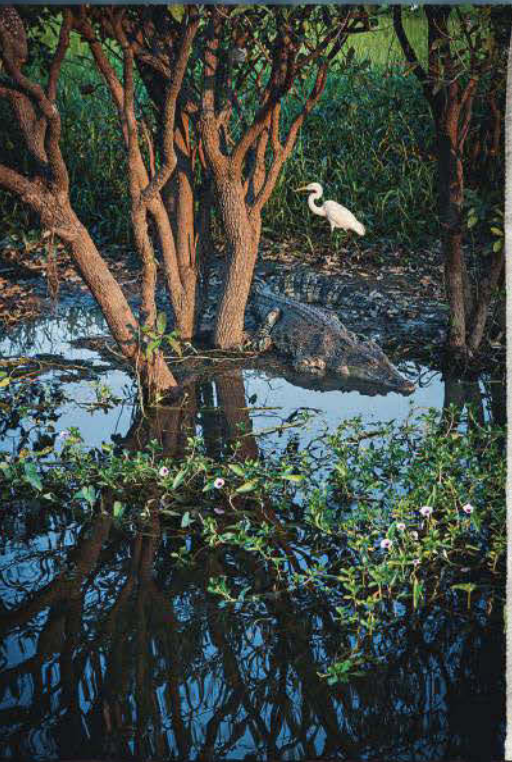


CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT
A jabiru at a Yellow Waters billabong;
by day brumbies keep a watchful
distance at Gunlom, stealing into the
campground at night; accommodation
is in tents with mesh inner walls for
stargazing, and comfortable
stretchers and swags to sleep on;
turkey bush (*Calytrix exstipulata*)
flowers from May until August, and
has a hard wood that was prized for
Indigenous spears and woomeras;
the beautiful Gunlom Falls cascade
into a deep waterhole near the
campground; Selena Kenyon weaves
baskets at Pudukul Aboriginal Cultural
Centre. FACING PAGE A walk through
the Yurmikmik hills leads to Motor Car
Falls and a refreshing plunge pool.





CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT
Lotus flowering in Yellow
Waters; stone country on the
Barrk Walk; sand palm (*Livistona
humilis*); the campsite attracts
a curious brumby; rock art
at Ubirr; a white egret calmly
observes a saltwater crocodile.



KAKADU ESSENTIALS

- Kakadu National Park is under the joint management of the traditional owners, the Bininj/Mungguy, and Parks Australia.
- The dry season runs between May and October, when days are clear and in the low- to mid-30s. The wet season builds up in October to November when thunderstorms are common.
- The Warradjan Aboriginal Cultural Centre showcases the culture of Kakadu's people while the Bowali Visitor Centre is a visual journey through the unique habitats of the region. Both have arts and crafts for sale. (08) 8938 1120; parksaustralia.gov.au/kakadu
- Saltwater crocodiles inhabit Kakadu waters. Always obey crocodile warning signs. Some places are safer to swim than others, but always assume a crocodile *could* be present.



pygmy geese, whistling ducks and rainbow bee-eaters. We lose count of the magpie geese. Buffalo graze in the distance and, as a red sun sets over the floodplain, large saltwater crocodiles ripple the surface.

World Expeditions has two semipermanent camps, at Muirella in Kakadu's northern section where we stay for two nights, and Gunlom in the south. The guides prepare dinner in a camp oven while the group sits around relaxing and reflecting on the day. Delicious feasts emerge from the camp oven — baked barramundi, curries and homely desserts such as apple crumble. Breakfasts are mostly continental style, and the guides pack an array of salads, dips, cheeses, cold meats and wrap breads for a picnic lunch.

The walking is graded introductory to moderate. We carry daypacks and cover from seven to 14 kilometres a day. Early the second day, we travel by four-wheel-drive bus to the well-known art sites at Nourlangie Rock. Aboriginal people painted surfaces in these rock shelters over thousands of years. A ghostly sailing ship records an early encounter with Europeans. We climb a steep, rough track on the Barrk Sandstone Walk up to the rocky ridge for spectacular views over stone country and a cooling breeze. The trail drops into a gully and does a 12-kilometre circuit of Nourlangie through the hot, dry woodland and back to our starting point.

While in the north, we visit the rock art galleries at Ubirr and climb the escarpment to look out across the vast Nadab floodplains to Arnhem Land. You can't help but feel the wonder of this special place.

"People refer to this place as an encyclopedia of art history," says Peter Sexton, one of our guides. Along with the oldest art forms — handprints — there are boomerangs that were painted more than 5000 years ago and an illustrated menu of favourite foods — barramundi, wallaby and goanna. At the end of a hot walk there's nothing like

cooling off in a natural plunge pool. Luckily, Kakadu has no shortage of beautiful, safe waterholes (though always check for crocodile warning signs), and over the following days we walk to the best of them.

Arriving at the southern Gunlom camp, there's time before dark to swim in a crystal-clear rock pool below spectacular falls. Pandanus leans over the water and the towering rock walls behind create a spectacular amphitheatre. A steep climb leads to the top of the falls. Up here, a series of small, perfect pools is perched on the edge of the escarpment. Nature's own infinity pools make a magic place to watch the sun going down over Kakadu.

In the southern Yurmikmik hills, we walk along an historic vehicle track to Motor Car Falls, tumbling into a small deep pool and visit Moline, a little-known waterhole.

The next day we walk through cool pandanus monsoon forest at Maguk Gorge to one of the most beautiful plunge pools imaginable. Above the falls, we find smaller, smooth-sided pools gouged out of the rock.

Leaving Kakadu, the next stop is Litchfield National Park, 110 kilometres south-west of Darwin. Litchfield's enormous magnetic and cathedral termite mounds are big attractions, as are the wonderful waterfalls in the park. There's time for a final swim at one of the most spectacular, Florence Falls.

But Kakadu has spoiled us. On this trip we've walked to special places where crowds don't go. We've often had the most beautiful of waterholes completely to ourselves. Litchfield is far busier by comparison and reality dawns that the end of the trip, and the bright lights and night-life of Darwin, are only a short drive away.

Give this walker the night-life of Kakadu any day. * *World Expedition's Kakadu Walking Adventure runs between May and September. For more information, 1300 720 000; worldexpeditions.com.au*

ON THIS TRIP WE'VE WALKED TO SPECIAL PLACES WHERE CROWDS DON'T GO.

Birdlife flocks to the Yellow Waters wetlands.



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Cool green Granny
Smith apples at
a Victorian orchard.

TWICE AS NICE

CHRISTINE REID SURVEYS THE FRUIT TREES THAT LOOK AS GOOD AS THEY TASTE.

Ornamental and productive are the two key words when it comes to fruit trees — but the harvest tends to dominate conversation, while beauty gets mentioned as an afterthought.

Of all the fruiting trees in the home garden, citrus are the most ornamental. The glossy foliage gives year-round enjoyment, the white flowers are not only pretty but fragrant too, and the fruit glow like lanterns among the branches.

Why have we relegated the citrus tree to the back garden? They are easily pruned to shape, can be planted together as a dense hedge or screen, live for 20 to 30 years and fruit just three years after planting. In Rome, orange trees are used as street plantings — bright orange balls amid the carefully-pruned evergreen foliage.

Lest you think that citrus can grow only in a particular climate, there is plenty of evidence that choosing the right cultivar is the key to success. Growers will tell you that they're extremely adaptable and you can grow citrus from Darwin to Tasmania, tolerating — with care — temperatures down as far as -4 degrees. Obviously, different species and varieties perform better and produce finer flavoured fruit when grown in their preferred climate.

The slowest-growing of all citrus are possibly the prettiest. Bright orange cumquats are a joy in winter, while in spring and summer they bring their delicious perfume to the garden — they can even be clipped into topiary shapes. And don't forget the glorious marmalade waiting at season's end!

At the opposite end of the spectrum are the many deciduous trees that are a glorious ornament to spring gardens. Ornamental pears have become fashionable for boundary and street plantings in recent years. However, lovely as they are, they are only decoration while two of the most desirable fruit trees for any garden — large or small — are the quince and pomegranate, which let you have your beauty and eat it, too.

The quince, *Cydonia oblonga*, has the most beautiful spring blossom — large, white blooms just touched with

pink. The new foliage sits below the blossom, further highlighting the fresh new flowers. Come autumn, as the clear yellow foliage falls, the remarkable fruit hangs on, voluptuously golden. They originated in central Asia, which is why they are so suited to our climate; they are tough, revelling in long, hot summers. A quince walk is one of the most glorious sights in a garden, whatever the season.

The pomegranate, *Punica granatum*, is a beautiful shrubby tree with bright green leaves, orange-red flowers, and fruit whose skin suggests a torrid sunset. It was never a major food crop but has been revered by many civilisations, often being associated with fertility. For Australian gardeners, pomegranates are as tough as they get: they love hot, dry summers. But they'll grow in a wide range of climates, being evergreen in the tropics and becoming deciduous in southern states.

Apples and pears have competed with each other for popularity over thousands and thousands of years. Pears are one of the most beautiful landscape trees in spring, but aren't as drought-tolerant as apples. As pears flower a month or so earlier than apples, the blossoms are vulnerable to frost damage. But if the harvest is a secondary consideration, don't worry. With clouds of unsurpassed spring blossom, apple and pear trees allow themselves to be twisted into espaliered shapes, creating dividing walls or tunnels.

So, whether you're planting an orchard or a lone lemon, enjoy the fruit trees that reward the eye as well as the tastebuds. >

WHERE TO BUY FRUIT TREES

Flemings Nurseries Based in Monbulk, Victoria, Flemings supplies nurseries in most states. (03) 9756 6105; www.flemings.com.au

Heritage Fruit Trees A Victorian nursery specialising in apple and pear varieties. heritagefruittrees.com.au

Woodbridge Fruit Trees A family-owned nursery begun 30 years ago in southern Tasmania. 0418 981 997; woodbridgefruittrees.com.au



FROM TOP Rhododendrons and azaleas bloom beneath the fruit tree branches in Lalla's Pear Walk; a Beurre Hardy pear is one of 60 varieties at Tasmania's Woodbridge Fruit Trees.

TASMANIAN PEAR WALK

It's said that wise gardeners plant 'pears for their heirs'. It would be hard to find a better example of planting for posterity than The Pear Walk, a lovely country garden at Lalla in northern Tasmania. This magnificent layout dates from 1906, when orchardist Frank Walker took up the land to grow fruit trees. Two varieties of pear were planted — Beurre Clergeau, and Kieffer's Hybrid which, while not self-pollinating, was considered one of the best pears for canning. The original walk was 24 trees on each side of the arch, planted about seven metres apart. The underplanting is mainly mollis azaleas and pink rhododendrons, but bulbs such as pale daffodils and crimson tulips can also ensure a spectacular spring display.

For information on The Pear Walk's cottage accommodation, telephone (03) 6395 4125 or visit thepearwalk.com

POLLINATION KEYS

CITRUS Oranges and lemons are self-fertilising, so a lone tree will bear fruit. Most citrus flower only in spring but have two to three seasons of growth each year; lemons will flower on any of this growth, virtually fruiting year round. Cumquats are the exception, as they flower in summer.

DECIDUOUS Many deciduous trees are also self-fertilising, cutting out the need for several trees for cross-pollination, including two of the most beautiful — quince and pomegranate. When it comes to apples and pears, it is desirable to plant at least one cross-pollinator.

Ranunculus



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light the way
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BLOOMING BEAUTY

TOWARDS THE END OF THE MONTH, WARM AREAS WILL SEE THE FIRST FLOWERS FROM THIS CHEERY BLOOMER. THEY LAST BEAUTIFULLY AS A CUT FLOWER OR BUY IN POTS FOR A LASTING GIFT.

in the garden

Decorative ideas for outdoors and a must-see garden festival to plan for.



SET TO BLOOM

Here's one for the diary: Floriade, the southern hemisphere's biggest garden show, opens in Canberra next month, with more than a million flowers in bloom, twilight events, workshops and more. September 12 to October 11. 1300 852 780; floriadeaustralia.com

trim down

Winter is the time to prune. Try these topiary shears, \$130, from The Lost and Found Dept. 0414 474 686; thelostandfounddepartment.com.au



plant a seed









These plain white pots from Pop & Scott come in four sizes, starting at \$100, and are suitable for indoor and outdoor use. popandscott.com



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planting guide

EARLY BULBS ARE IN BLOOM AND SPRING IS ON THE WAY – TIME TO GET PLANTING!

NAME OF PLANT	HEIGHT OF PLANT	SUN OR SHADE	PLANTING ZONE
Azalea (<i>Rhododendron indica</i> hybrids syn. <i>Azalea indica</i>) In bloom with a mass of white, pink, salmon, red or purple flowers, azaleas are hard to beat from late winter to spring.	50cm–3m Evergreen shrubs are top choices as container plants in shade or to grow under trees.	 Acid soil or potting mix is best. Lightly prune and feed after flowering.	CMTS
Camellia (<i>Camellia japonica</i>) Glossy evergreen leaves and large white, pink or red flowers make this shrub a standout from winter to spring. Camellias are long-lived and problem-free. Look for potted plants in bloom now.	1–5m Plant for an evergreen backdrop or screen. Can be clipped to shape.	 Enjoys full sun in cool zones but protect from frost. Feed in spring. Grow in pots where soils are alkaline.	CMT
Carrot (<i>Daucus carota</i> subsp. <i>sativus</i>) Carrots are available in a variety of sizes and colours, making growing them at home an exciting endeavour. Plant seed now for harvest in late spring and enjoy orange, red, purple or white carrots.	20cm Ferny stalks produce an edible root ready to harvest around three months from sowing seed.	 Deep, sandy soils and regular watering produce the best carrots. Grow small varieties in containers or shallow soils.	CMTSTr
Clivia (<i>Clivia miniata</i>) Admired for its heads of orange flowers in late winter and spring, there are now cream, yellow and pink varieties to enjoy. Showy red berries form after flowering. Native to southern Africa.	30–40cm A strappy, evergreen clumping plant that's ideal to mass under trees or to grow in a pot.	 Drought-tolerant but protect from frost and hot sun. Divide clumps for more plants or sow seed in spring or summer.	CMTSTr
Ginger (<i>Zingiber officinale</i>) This plant grows from an edible rhizome (underground stem). Cut back stems in autumn or winter. Harvest pieces of rhizome as needed from autumn to early spring. Divide clumps in winter or spring.	1–1.5m The tall, leafy canes develop and flower through spring and summer.	 Plant rhizomes in late winter or early spring in rich, well-drained soil. Protect from frost.	TSTr
Lilium (<i>Lilium</i> hybrids) Plan ahead for summer flowers by planting bulbs now in the garden or in pots. They will grow into tall stems topped with trumpet flowers in white, pink, yellow or orange. Excellent cut flower.	50cm–1m Stems appear in spring and early summer. Plants die back after flowering.	 Protect emerging shoots from snails or slugs. Fertilise in spring. Tall varieties may need staking.	CMTS
Potato (<i>Solanum tuberosum</i>) Virus-free 'seed' potatoes (small tubers) planted now in 15cm-deep furrows in the vegetable patch produce kilograms of potatoes for a summer harvest. Begin digging spuds as the plants bloom and die back.	30–40cm A leafy, frost-tender annual vegetable, whose bounty lies beneath the soil's surface.	 Water regularly. Mound soil around plant base to keep developing potatoes well covered.	CMTSTr
Wattle (<i>Acacia</i> spp.) Known for fluffy yellow or cream flowers. There are around 900 wattle species in Australia, so simply select species that are endemic to your area. They are an excellent fast-growing choice for shelter plantings.	30cm–10m Depending on the species, wattles can be trees, shrubs or groundcover plants.	 Grow from seed or plant as seedlings (tube stock) into well-drained soil.	CMTSTr

KEY



Sun



Semi-shade



Shade

C = Cool climate M = Mediterranean T = Temperate S = Subtropical Tr = Tropical

book club

REVIEWS ANNABEL LAWSON

A couple of one-offs this month to make your imagination fizz and tingle, plus three stirring memoirs, and a treat for dog lovers.

A YEAR OF MARVELLOUS WAYS

SARAH WINMAN, TINDER PRESS, \$29.99

Now here is something truly unusual. I hold my breath. Will it succeed in coaxing the reader away from set expectations and into unfamiliar zones of storytelling? Winman's central character is an old woman living on the Cornish coast among a flurry of winsome weather. She is waiting, not for an ending but for a person or an event that will make her long life complete. We learn, via coruscating glimpses, who she is — a person whose presence alters others and who challenges our views of what matters and what does not.

WITH JUST ONE SUITCASE

CHERYL KOENIG, WILD DINGO PRESS, \$24.95

When Cheryl Low married Robert Koenig, she was aware that their two fathers crossed paths long ago in their homeland, Romania. What she uncovered is the substance of this arresting family history. I was glued to the sofa for eight hours. Istvan/Steven reaches Australia via a Siberian gulag, Germany and Austria. People smugglers bring Frici/Fred from Romania to Budapest, and hence to Australia. Though they find jobs here, good wives, and steadfastly banish memories of subjugation and compromise, troubles abound. It's the scenes between family members that make the events so compelling; before migration outwitting the oppressor and after adapting with some ambivalence to an excess of freedom.

ON THE MOVE: A LIFE

OLIVER SACKS, PICADOR, \$34.99

He sprang to fame with *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*. I imagined the eminent professor as a manicured academic but his autobiography shows us a biker, drug consumer and alcoholic who zigzagged through half-a-dozen careers, refusing tenure and appointments. Sacks declared his homosexuality when still at school, but it wasn't until he was 70 that he found his soulmate. He has been described as the David Attenborough of the human mind. An enthralling memoir.

THE DOG SQUAD

VIKKI PETRAITIS, MICHAEL JOSEPH, \$32.99

An early attempt at setting up a unit in Victoria failed, but today the team of handlers with their dogs does excellent work. There are specialities. Ruger is an attack dog, Butch is the dog of choice when knives are involved, Blitz holds the record score of nine arrests in

one day, Digger stands firm under a hail of bullets, Rip scents drugs, Renko is a 'finder'. It's an old wife's tale that dogs can track a scent given a sniff of a missing human's garment. They follow the most recent scent and therefore it's important to stand back and not contaminate the scent trail. At the end of each chapter, the featured dog's handler offers tips that we can use with our own companion animals. Great stuff.

OUTBACK MIDWIFE

BETH McRAE, BANTAM, \$34.99

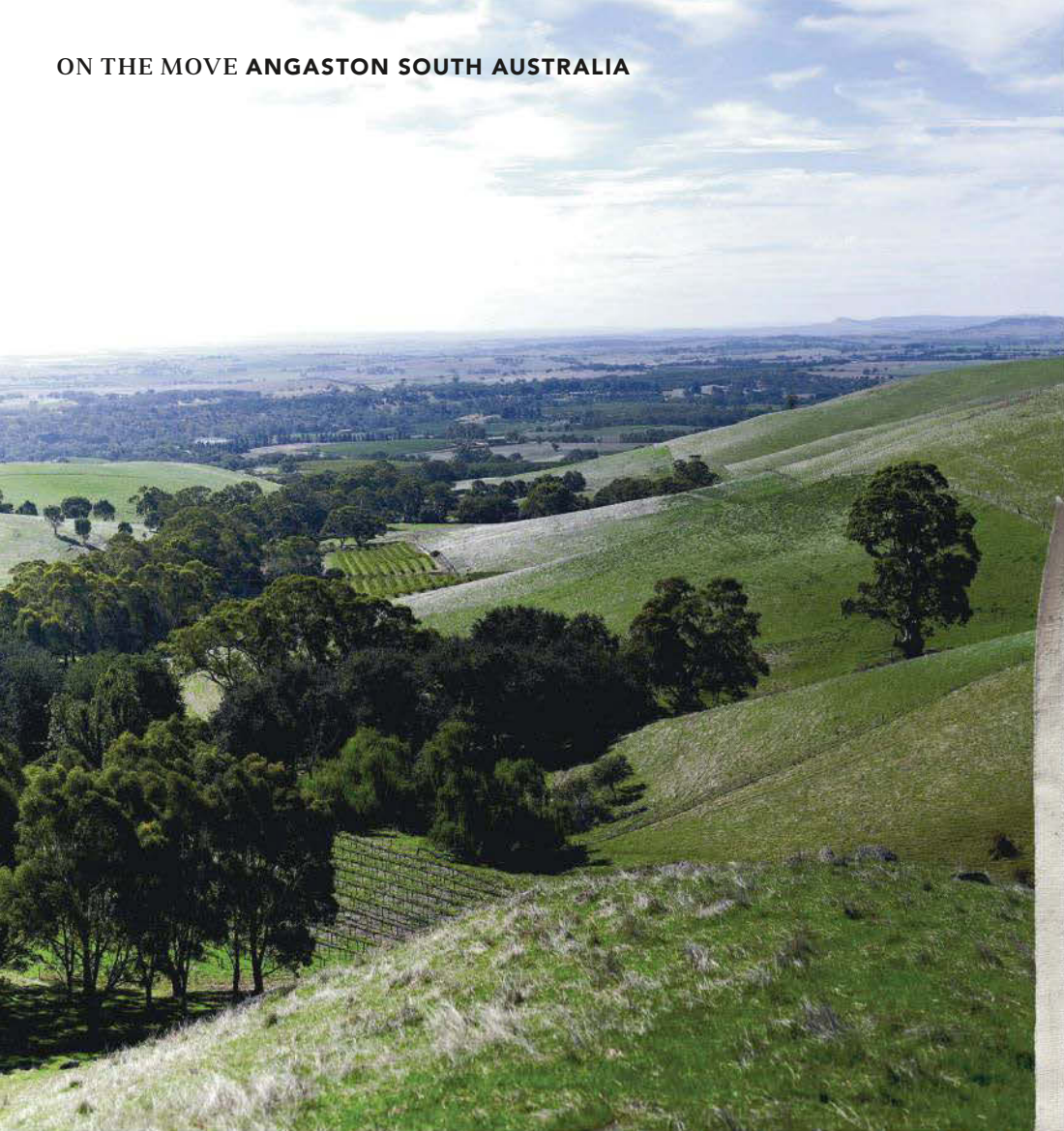
You can see the warmth and integrity in McRae's back cover photo. No wonder her tutor said, "You have a lovely manner, Beth, I would have you deliver my babies any time." Back in 1975, midwives were underlings whenever a doctor was around. That has changed. When Beth herself became pregnant, complications broadened her field of interest. After 30 years in practice and teaching, she realised a lifelong dream and went to Arnhem Land to work "in partnership with women and their families".

PRETTY BABY

MARY KUBICA, HARLEQUIN MIRA, \$29.99

We ricochet between points of view in this modern tragedy. In suburban Illinois, a loving but silly wife invites into her home a troubled waif with a neglected baby. At first it might just work. Heidi gets a baby to love, Willow the waif gets the care and attention denied her during childhood, and Heidi's husband Chris can keep his secret vices. However, a crime committed in Nebraska brings police to the door. Illinois has abolished the death penalty but in Nebraska it's still on the statute book. A lot is at stake. *





Angaston

THIS BAROSSA VALLEY TOWN IS A POPULAR FOODIE DESTINATION, BUT WILL ALSO APPEAL TO THOSE THINKING OF A PERMANENT MOVE TO THE COUNTRY.

One of South Australia's oldest European settlements, Angaston was originally named German Pass when the area was surveyed in 1841. But when the town was laid out in 1857 by George Fife Angas, a major investor in the young colony, it became Angas Town. Angas was a religious dissenter who sponsored like-minded immigrants to South Australia, including German Lutherans, who settled widely in the Barossa Valley. Despite this, Angaston on the east side of the valley has retained an English character, whereas other towns in the area have a more obvious Silesian heritage.

Located 77 kilometres north-east of Adelaide, the attractive rural town is now the hub of the Barossa food and wine scene, and is a drawcard for local, interstate and international visitors. It has many heritage buildings and is surrounded by rich pastoral lands that are also renowned for viticulture and fruit-growing.

Angaston has a population of around 2000. The median age is 43 years and families make up 54 per cent of residents. The main occupation groups are labourers, professionals and managers, technicians and trades workers. The wine industry is a major employer.

For more information, visit angaston.org.au

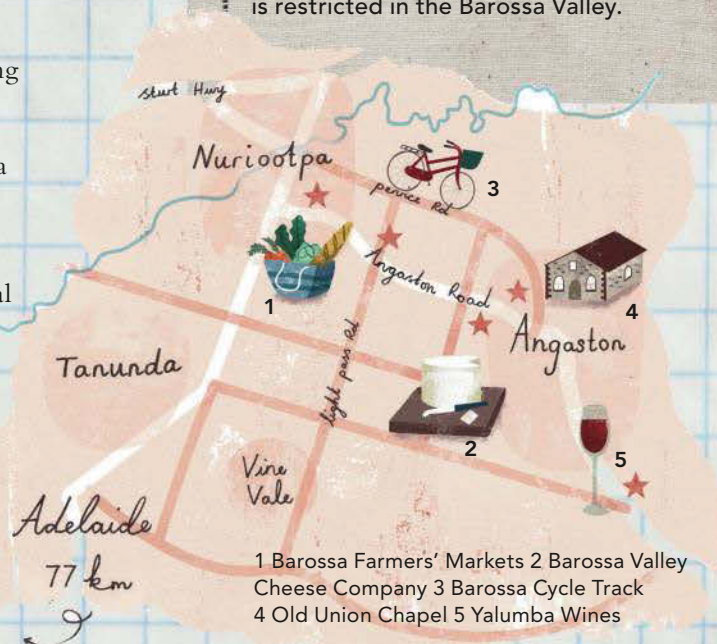
TRAVEL TO AND FROM

Angaston is about 75 minutes' drive from Adelaide, via Port Wakefield Road and the Northern Expressway. On weekdays, there are regular bus services to Gawler Railway Station that connect with trains to Adelaide. On Saturdays, the schedule is slightly less frequent, and there are two services a day on Sundays and public holidays.

PROPERTY

According to local real estate agent Andrew Newland, the market is "hot" and there are more buyers than properties. Angaston has a diverse range of housing, including original and early 20th century buildings. "Properties are selling before they go to market," he says. "They range from \$350,000–\$400,000 for a three-, two- or even one-bedroom home to \$2.5 million at the upper end."

While community facilities are expanding — such as a proposed new fitness centre — Andrew says there is no major development planned. Development outside town boundaries is restricted in the Barossa Valley.





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP Vintners Bar & Grill is a landmark; grilled prawns with galangal salad at FermentAsian; the Barossa Valley Cheese Company, winner of many awards for its artisanal produce. FACING PAGE, FROM LEFT Vineyards are everywhere in the Barossa Valley; a dairy farm at nearby Koonunga is one of the prime milk suppliers for the Barossa Valley Cheese Company.

eating and drinking

Angaston has much to offer food lovers.

- **40s Café** Breakfast, lunch, dinner, wine and outstanding pizzas. 30 Murray Street. (08) 85642901; 40scafe.com.au
- **Angaston Hotel** A popular local with traditional country pub fare. 59 Murray Street. (08) 8564 2428; angastonhotel.com.au
- **Barossa Farmers' Market** Saturdays, 7.30–11.30am. Stockwell Road. 0402 026 882. (See map.)
- **Barossa Valley Cheese Company** Handmade cheese by Victoria McClurg. 67B Murray Street. (08) 8564 3636; barossacheese.com.au (See map.)
- **Casa Carboni Italian Cooking School & Enoteca** A cooking school, wine bar, pantry and café menu inspired by northern Italy, as featured in our July issue. 67 Murray Street. 0415 157 669; casacarboni.com.au
- **FermentAsian Restaurant** South-East Asian food made from homegrown produce and fine wines. 90 Murray Street, Tanunda. (08) 8563 0765; fermentasian.com.au
- **Sorby Adams Wine Room and Pantry** Offering Sorby Adams wines, gourmet goods and a seasonal menu featuring South Australian produce. 51 Murray Street. (08) 8564 2993; sorbyadamswines.com
- **Vintners Bar & Grill** A modern twist on quality South Australian food, with an extensive wine list from the Barossa Valley and beyond. Corner Stockwell and Angaston roads. (08) 8564 2488; vintners.com.au



LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

SCHOOLS

Angaston has a childcare and early learning centre, a kindergarten and Angaston Primary School. The Good Shepherd Lutheran School is a private primary school. The Redeemer Lutheran School at Nuriootpa, seven kilometres from Angaston, offers primary and secondary education, and Faith Lutheran College at Tanunda (11 kilometres away) is a coeducational secondary school. Nuriootpa also has a high school, as does Gawler, which is 39 kilometres to the south-west.

ATTRACTIONS

- **Barossa Cycle Track** A trail, seven kilometres long, that follows the old railway line to Nuriootpa. Hire a bike from Angaston Hardware. 5 Sturt Street. (08) 8564 2055. (See map.)
- **Old Union Chapel** Built in 1844, this lovely historic church can be hired for events. 16 Penrice Road. (08) 8564 3222; oldunionchapel.com.au (See map.)
- **Yalumba Wines** At Australia's oldest family-owned winery, taste wines at the cellar door in one of the original buildings. Eden Valley Road. (08) 8561 3200; yalumba.com (See map.)

SHOPPING

- **Brocante In The Barossa** A fine decorating and home makeover outlet, specialising in Anne Sloan chalk paints. 49A Murray Street. (08) 8564 2772; brocante-in-the-barossa.com
- **The Green Room Salon and Spa** Relax at this salon that has won awards for its use of organic beauty products. 49B Murray Street. (08) 8564 2110; thegreenroomparlour.com.au
- **Viva The Flower Store** Beautiful arrangements and regular workshops. 49A Murray Street. (08) 8564 3393; vivaflowerstore.com



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BLOOMING TALENT

Transform yourself from a novice to a painter in only 12 months with Jacqueline Coates's Blooms Painting Method. This affordable, easy and fun art series is delivered online through weekly emailed art lessons. The course costs \$69 a month, and Jacqueline is offering the first month for just \$19.95. howtopaintblooms.com

collectables

John McPhee evaluates readers' precious objects.

Q This tea set was inherited from my aunt. For as long as I could remember, the decorative metalwork on the pottery was almost black, but one day out of curiosity I gave it a rub with a silver cloth and it polished up beautifully. I have tried to find out more about its origins, with little success, so would appreciate anything you could tell me about it.

Helen McLean, Geelong, Victoria

Made at Lovett's Langley Mill Pottery in Derbyshire in the late 19th or early 20th century, this tea set is a great example of Art Nouveau decoration on otherwise very conventional, and practical, shapes. It has been suggested that this kind of applique silver decoration was executed in the US, but I suspect that there were firms in England, especially around Sheffield and Birmingham, which specialised in this work. This set is in fine condition,

If you have a precious (or simply mysterious) object that puzzles you, send your inquiry, along with a colour print or high-resolution digital image, your suburb or town, and your daytime telephone number, to Collectables, Country Style, Locked Bag 5030, Alexandria, NSW 2015, or send an email to Greg Taylor at greg.taylor@news.com.au. The photographs must be clear and show the whole object against a white background. Photographs will not be returned, even if they are not published.



although the sugar bowl probably once had a lid, and it is worth caring for and perhaps finding out a little more about it. The pottery closed in 1982 but there is a Langley Mill Pottery Collectors Society, 64 Hands Road, Heanor, England DE75 7HB, which may be able to give you more information.

AUCTIONS

- **11th Important Australian art.** Sotheby's Australia, Melbourne. The very best paintings and sculpture. sothebysaustralia.com.au
- **13th Bush Auction.** Dirty Janes Emporium & Antique Market, Bowral, NSW. Wintry weekend fun. dirtyjanes.com
- **16th Jewels and objects d'art.** Leonard Joel, Sydney. Jewellery and decorative arts. leonardjoel.com.au
- **23rd Single-owner decorative arts.** Mossgreen, Sydney. Antique and vintage items. mossgreen.com.au

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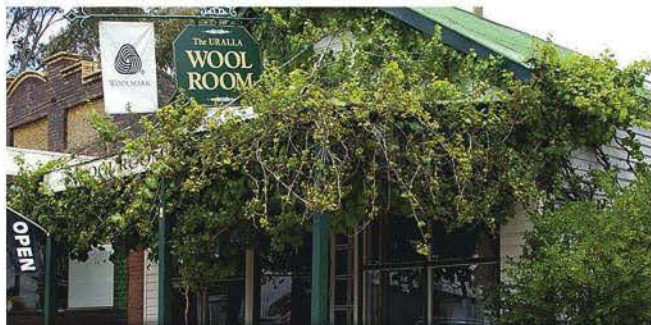
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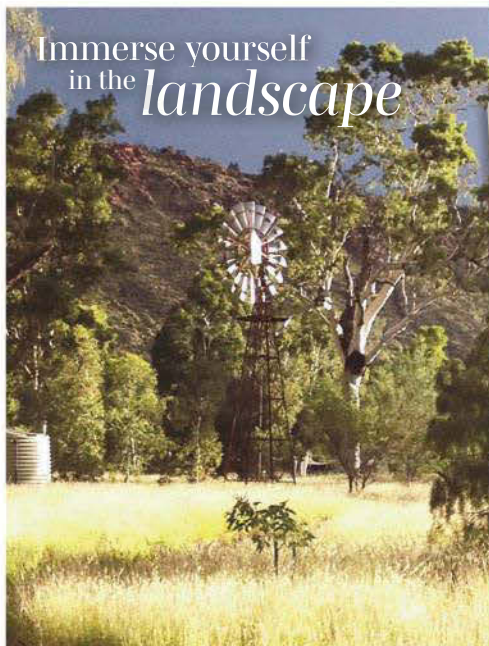
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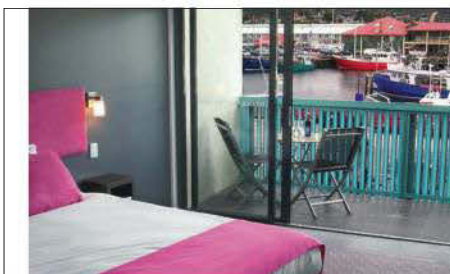
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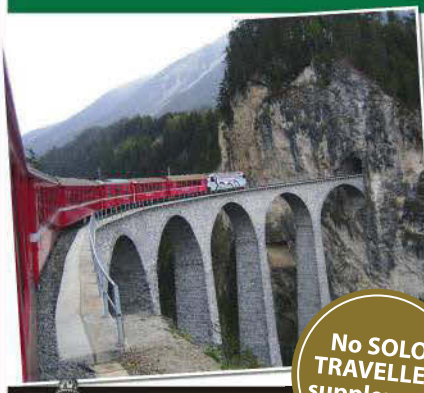


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“Don’t look now, but I think we’re becoming cosmopolitan,” said The Chosen One.

dunedoo after dark

Flamenco fundraiser or Louisiana swamp stomp? Rob Ingram decides his village has gone global.

There was not much else happening in the street, but those closing in on the modest concrete block building were picking up something decidedly exotic escaping through the louvred windows. The spicy chicken, chorizo and chilli aromas of an authentic Louisiana jambalaya, the wail of boogie blues, and the reverberation of unrestrained swamp-stomp dancing. A pick-up truck pulled away from the kerb, probably off to park out down by the river. The Mighty Mississippi? Not quite. It was the Mighty Talbragar, as it happened. For this is Dunedoo After Dark.

“Sufferin’ succotash!” I said to The Chosen One. “Looks like the Global Village has finally found us.”

It is 50 years since Marshall McLuhan, a Canadian communication theorist, introduced us to the concept of the Global Village. A revolution in technology advances and globalisation would create a universal culture in which Burmese hill tribesmen could eat haggis and the electric guitar might start drowning out the drums of Africa. We would be living in local habitats with global support systems.

We came to live near NSW’s Dunedoo knowing that its cultural identity was not in imminent danger of export. When we moved here, we had to mention the names of six other towns to give people an idea of where it was located. Anyone talking about culture out here was referring to either yoghurt or bacteria.

Now here we are with New Orleans-driven rhythm and blues drifting out of the bowling club, and the sworn defenders of the pie and the pizza are queueing up for a po’ boy sandwich or Cajun pulled beef with corn mash and jalapeños.

Across town, some very good local people who assist those challenged by cancer are holding a fundraiser. It’s a flamenco night, and the old Leadville Hall is a blender full of castanets, stamping feet, churros, sangria and the spontaneous passion of the flamenco guitar.

“Don’t look now, but I think we’re becoming cosmopolitan,” said The Chosen One.

So look, thanks for your concern, but we’re not the social and cultural wasteland you think we are out here. In Global Village terms we might even be Main Street. Dunedoo remains the naturally bonded, cohesive and caring community it always was — but because we’re now celebrating freedom from the old tyranny of geography, it’s suddenly a multicultural madhouse.

Cultural evolution is enriching our lives. We are now as familiar with a jambalaya as a jam sandwich. We’re confident on the dance floor whether it’s foxtrot or flamenco. The CWA stall is offering pumpkin torta di zucca as well as pumpkin scones.

I must admit though, that even on my first visit to Dunedoo I was impressed with the apparent international flavour of the menu at the pub.

“I’ll have the Chicken Kiev,” I said. “But it should have an ‘i’ in it — the menu says Chicken Kev.”

“Thanks,” said the waitress. “I’ll tell Kev.”

So, three cheers for the Global Village and its cross-fertilisation of ideas and experiences. I just hope that somewhere in New Orleans there’s a little group of Creole folk sitting on a porch enjoying lamingtons, shearers’ scones and caramel walnut slices... and saying, “How good is *this!*” *

The Country Squire column has appeared in every issue of *Country Style* since its inception 26 years ago. Rob Ingram lives in a former courthouse, police station and jail in the NSW central west village of Cobbora near Dunedoo — as he says, “it’s better to do time in my jail than somebody else’s”.

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